



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



3 3433 07605479 4



SOULS *in* PAWN

A STORY OF NEW YORK LIFE



MARGARET BLAKE ROBINSON



HC



12



Robin
11

SOULS IN PAWN



177717
878 6.

Souls in Pawn

4

A Story of New York Life

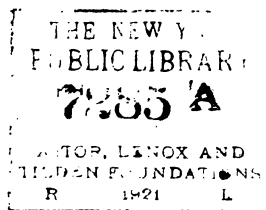
BY
MARGARET BLAKE ROBINSON



NEW YORK CHICAGO TORONTO
Fleming H. Revell Company
1901

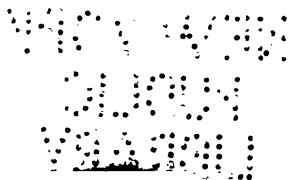
DP

RECEIVED
JUN 10 1901



Copyright, 1900
by
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

Entered at Stationers' Hall



THE CAXTON PRESS
NEW YORK.

DEDICATION

To my friends, my readers, my critics—those present and to come, as well as to those who will taste my doctrine and label it as no good thing should be labelled—to these four I dedicate "Souls in Pawn" as a mark of my affection and esteem, and as a proof of my impartiality.

PREFACE

THE question "What is Truth" has never been fully answered, neither has "What is Fiction"; so I do not pretend to solve it by saying this book is either the one or the other. It is merely an attempt to paint the struggles of human souls toward God; to reveal the throbbing of real hearts through the medium of pen and ink; and to win sympathy from brother for brother.

I once knew an Irish blacksmith, by the name of Billy Gog, who was a philosopher in his way; and when his parish priest scolded him for not going to church oftener, and loving it better, he said: "Father M——, we're all made of mud, and wan puddle is no better'n another; your puddle happens to be the chapel kind, while mine is only the horse-shoein' kind; that's all." And who will not say that Billy did not come as near the truth as Socrates or Epictetus; for who can say what he would or would not do in a certain place, until environment had shaped him into a being colored in mind, soul,

and body by the lights and shadows of his surroundings.

"Souls in Pawn" is a story, yet Richard Master-son, who appears in its pages, is as real to me as the pen in my hand. I know him and take pleasure in introducing him to you. Katie Finnegan is not merely a creature of my imagination. She can be found in every large city; and the true Christian will forgive her slang for the sake of discovering her real self—just as Mrs. de Ruttyer did; just as I have myself; for I frankly confess that I fell in love with Katie Finnegan as I wrote about her day after day. And Katherine; my brave, loyal, fearless heroine, who learns her hard lessons so well; whose heart is always full of sunshine and laughter, who has spurned long-faced religion in order to be anointed with "the oil of gladness"—I have met her, I have loved and admired her, and have tried to paint her. If I have succeeded I have done a great work. If I have failed I ask forgiveness—yours and hers. John; "the Christian Merchant"; "Daddy Longlegs"; and the Rev. Dr. Irving, I have no apology for. You may laugh or weep or grow indignant over them as the mood strikes you, or as the life I have tried to breathe into them manifests itself; but they will remain as types to be met in every Christian community in the land. I hope

when you finish this book you will love children better; despise (not hate, for we can only hate what has greatness in it) hypocrisy and hypocrites; be a stronger, nobler, and more fearless Christian (*not a mere professor*); and love the Lord Jesus better for His devotion to and patience with, us all; for we are a queer, unmanageable lot at best. For this purpose and this only has Souls in Pawn been written.

Now read it.

MARGARET BLAKE ROBINSON.

NEW YORK.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I	
	PAGE
THE MOCK PENITENT	13
CHAPTER II	
AN IRISHMAN'S PHILOSOPHY	17
CHAPTER III	
SEEKING HEAVEN THROUGH A WOMAN'S HEART . . .	23
CHAPTER IV	
WHERE MARRIAGE WAS A FAILURE	29
CHAPTER V	
SEEKING AID FROM THE INVISIBLE	37
CHAPTER VI	
KATHERINE HAS A NOISY VISITOR	42
CHAPTER VII	
A DISCUSSION OF CHINATOWN AND ITS CONVERTS . .	51
CHAPTER VIII	
THE FINNEGAN ASSOCIATION	59

CHAPTER IX		PAGE
LIZZIE KELLY REFUSES TO BE BRIBED AND THE CLUB RECEIVES VISITORS		64
CHAPTER X		
HOW A MOUSE SQUELCHED A DOMESTIC TYRANT . . .		74
CHAPTER XI		
RICHARD PROVOKES A DISCUSSION		83
CHAPTER XII		
CUPID AS A THEOLOGICAL PROFESSOR		95
CHAPTER XIII		
THE TRAIL OF THE SERPENT		103
CHAPTER XIV		
A HYPOCRITE IN A TRAP		114
CHAPTER XV		
COMEDY AND TRAGEDY IN CHINATOWN		127
CHAPTER XVI		
"CHOP SUI" AND JEALOUSY		138
CHAPTER XVII		
RICHARD MAKES A CONFESSION OF LOVE		146
CHAPTER XVIII		
KATHERINE'S EYES ARE OPENED AND JOHN IS OFFERED A WIFE		162

Contents 11

CHAPTER XIX		PAGE
HOW AN OUTCAST DIED		171
 CHAPTER XX		
A SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL STRUGGLE		181
 CHAPTER XXI		
TWO CONFERENCES AND A VISIT FROM "DADDY LONG-LEGS"		190
 CHAPTER XXII		
KATHERINE REPLIES TO A RASCAL AND VENTURES AN OPINION ON SOCIALISTIC DOCTRINES		205
 CHAPTER XXIII		
BROUGHT TO BAY		215
 CHAPTER XXIV		
MIRTH AND MADNESS		227
 CHAPTER XXV		
"WHOM GOD HATH JOINED"		236
 CHAPTER XXVI		
WITHIN THE WALLS OF SING SING		242
 CHAPTER XXVII		
A KNIGHT OF THE NEW CHIVALRY		248
 CHAPTER XXVIII		
HOW A MAN IS BUILT		258

CHAPTER XXIX		PAGE
KATIE FINNEGAN ON UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE		264
CHAPTER XXX		
FROM LOCKSTEP AND STRIPES		275
CHAPTER XXXI		
ONE OF GOD'S IRREGULARS		283
CHAPTER XXXII		
A PARTING GLIMPSE		292

SOULS IN PAWN

CHAPTER I

THE MOCK PENITENT

It is a large, roomy mission, bright, cheerful, and sunny, that we peep into ; nothing like the meeting-rooms so common in the great cities where sinners are supposed to flock delightedly to hear the Word, but where they much more often crawl in dejectedly from the cold and unsympathetic curbstones. Being in the neighborhood of Twenty-third Street, New York, where the " better class of sinners " are supposed to congregate, the mission is made as inviting as possible. There is a pretty fair toned organ, a lovely young organist, and some good etchings and water-colors ; which, together with the freshly painted, light-blue walls make a rather attractive whole during the nightly service.

The Rev. Dr. Irving is preaching. On his night there is always a goodly crowd. Some explain this by saying he has " a way about him," which is cer-

tainly rather vague, to say the least ; others say that his earnestness drives away the ennui from his listeners ; and there are a few wiser ones who say it is really because he means what he says, and that he always looks as if his heart is breaking when some young fellow, with whom he has been talking, goes out into the night without having yielded to the better influences.

His daughter Katherine is sitting by the organ, her large soft-brown eyes looking up toward the skylight, and her hands lying listlessly on the dumb keys. Nearly every one in the room seems moved by her father's impassioned voice and thrilling words ; but she sits quietly, though there is an inspired look on her face which at least one in the audience catches. He is sitting near the middle aisle, half-way down the room ; a tall, broad-shouldered, gray-eyed young man, whose lips look resolute and firm despite a touch of weakness that slightly curves their corners when their owner's nervous twitchings at his brown mustache brings them into view. He is dressed well and in good taste, but there is a slight odor of tobacco and brandy hovering around him, in spite of the delicate perfume carefully sprayed on his face and handkerchief.

" I wonder whether I shall go up or not," is the question that is troubling his mind. The " going

up" means up to the rough "penitent form" where converts kneel nightly when they go forward in response to the preacher's appeal to "give their hearts to God."

Katherine sees the little struggle, though apparently she is looking in every other direction than his; and as he is debating the question with himself, the Janitor of the mission puts a little slip of paper into his hand which reads: "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.

"KATHERINE IRVING."

The sight of the written words sends a strange thrill through the reader's heart, and if he were alone he feels he would have pressed the piece of paper to his warm lips; but instead, he lifts his eyes to the writer, and after being careful that she has noted a perplexed and soft look in their big frank-looking depths, he pencils the words: "I can't, as I have too many doubts. May I call at the Parsonage to-morrow? I am heart-sick and wretched.

"RICHARD MASTERSON."

Katherine nods. Richard Masterson smiles softly, and then rises from his seat and moves toward the door, his usually straight shoulders bent as if some weight of grief is oppressing them. When he reaches the street, a broad queer-looking smile runs

across his face, spoiling the honest open look that usually occupies it.

“ I am smitten, as sure as I am a rascal,” he says a little ruefully ; and then he sighs and thrusts his hands into his pockets, looks at the little note again, and after he has sworn under his breath, turns his steps toward a nearby café ; but, strange to say, a little tear dims his eyes, which he flicks off gently with his handkerchief before he opens the door of the house of gayety.

CHAPTER II

AN IRISHMAN'S PHILOSOPHY

A BURST of laughter greets his appearance as he goes to a table in a rear room at which several men are seated having what they call a "quiet little game."

"Well, your reverence, how is the mission?" asks a jolly looking fellow, slightly bald and a good deal the worse for liquor.

"Reverence nothing! He is one of General Booth's majors," says a second, who nearly swallows his cigar, so delighted is he with his own joke.

"Since Richard is a Catholic, I would say 'tis a bishopric he would be more likely to seek," suggests a fat man with an Irish accent; "but," as an after thought, "he has a wife, an' that would be the divil of an obstacle."

"Oh, I would bring your influence to bear on the Pope, and that would be all right," says Richard gayly; but he does not look as jolly as his words would indicate.

After drinking a few glasses of brandy, and enduring the quizzing remarks of his fellow-drinkers, he nods to the Irishman and the two retire to a little private room labelled an "office."

"Ned, I want you to help me," he says, when the waiter has placed a bottle of brandy and a siphon of vichy before them.

"Glad to do it, Richy, old fellow, if I can. What's the rub?"

"Ned, I'm tired of my life."

"Oh, you are; is it goin' to take mine y'are?"

Richard smiles, but adds gravely, "I hate gambling; I hate horse-races; I despise the politics that makes a fellow the henchman of any rascal who has a bank account and a nerve—I want to throw it up."

"Say, Rich, it's that mission," says the Irishman trying to look as shocked as he feels. This is a very difficult thing for a fat man with plump red cheeks and a bottle of brandy before him, so Ned only partially succeeds. "It's the mission," he repeats; "I thought it was only a mash, but it's turning your brains upside down, and it seems to me the sooner ye call a halt the better—Are ye in love, Rich?"

"Why, man, you know I'm married!"

"Oh, faith, I know that, but Ned Brady knows a trick or two; and one o' them is that love will fall if there was eleven old women waiting to kill it for

dhropping. Now if it's in that way, I can help ye; I'm yer man."

Richard looks sullen and stares at the floor for a few moments; then his whole face changes and a merry look comes over it.

"We'll drink to it, Ned," he says laughingly.

"An' here's to her health. May she fall head over heels in love with ye before ye get the vote of the district, and," significantly, "that won't be very long if you stick to yer good sense."

"Amen!" cries Richard, and the two click glasses.

"My wife is troubling me, Ned," breaks in Richard after a pause.

"'Tis a way wives have," says the Irishman philosophically. "Don't you pay her alimony?"

"Oh, yes, but she wants me."

"Well, you must remember she's never seen yer friend," says Ned, and the two laugh at the joke.

"'Pon my word, I wish she would, then. It's beastly, Ned, to have a woman in love with you whom you never loved and never can."

"How the deuce did you come to marry her then?"

"Oh, because I was a raw, foolish fellow; and because when I met her I would have done anything from climbing a pole to breaking a fellow's jaw. Give a fool of twenty a long string, and it will take him years to unravel the knots he makes."


"True for you, Richard, unless he does as I do, cut the sthring afther each knot and only look ahead."

"You do not know women when you talk like that, Ned."

"Oh, don't I? Faith, 'tis they that don't know me," said Ned, laughing. "An' that's what keeps me out o' trouble. No letters, no trunk, no past; nothing but a change of clothes, an innocent look, an' some quotations from the poets. You'll never get in trouble if that's yer baggage."

"Well, philosopher, dost thou then think there are no happy marriages where love and truth and loyalty hold sway, as the idealist says," asked Richard, smiling, but looking more anxious than he would have cared to admit he was.

"No, Richie, I don't," answered the Irishman solemnly. "I once did; 'twas years ago when I wrapped my ould foolish heart around a woman. She could," this a little bitterly, "put her arms round a chap's neck, an' make him forget that 'twas to the sun he was indebted for light, an' to God for life. I took to writing her poethry, an' to planning for the future in a way that used to buoy up all the smothering ambition in my soul. I even took to goin' to mass an' sayin' my prayers. We got married an' kem out here, an' afther two years she met an Eng-



lishman—she was a little English girl herself—an old lover of hers, an' 'twas that dhrove me to saloon keepin' an' the etceteras."

There is a little quaver in Ned's voice as he concludes, but a second later he throws back his head, and in a rich, strong voice, sings a verse of "The Cruiskeen Lawn."

When he has finished, Richard says gravely, "I never knew you were married, Ned."

"Very few do, Richie. Keep it mum. I don't want the girls to know; 'twould spoil me chances, ye know."

"I should think you'd be sick of girls after that," murmurs Richard disgustedly.

"So I am, Rich. But if a chap doesn't want to be marked as a crank and sat upon everywhere he goes, he must solemnly swear they're all angels."

"You're a philosopher," Ned.

"No, I'm not. But I have more sense than yer love-sick chap who goes to the dogs. I went to the kennel, but I objected to living there and came back."

"'Tis a lonesome subject," says Richard after a pause. "How about business, Ned?"

"Fine! Fools are born every ten minutes these days. Some of them object when they have to borrow carfare to get home; but a game's a game."

"So it is," says Richard, "and a good game at that. We did well when we struck this place together, Ned."

"Ye mane yer lucky to have such a partner as me. Well, I guess ye are," and Ned begins to look pompous and important.

"I am going home," says Richard rising. "I think 'tis my liver."

"So 'tis, old chap; so 'tis. A saloon liver doesn't thrive in a mission."

Richard laughs and goes out. "I actually believe I would have gone to work to-night," he says to himself as he draws his coat around him. "That girl almost turned my head. Confound it! I wish I had less moods. I'm nearly as moody as a woman. I wonder how the dickens a fellow makes love to a real good woman—one who prays. I have experience in all other lines but that one. Well, I will see her to-morrow."

CHAPTER III

SEEKING HEAVEN THROUGH A WOMAN'S HEART

WHEN he calls on her next day he does not know that she has been praying for him all the morning; but he does his best to look as if he himself had spent hours on his knees.

"I am glad you came, Mr. Masterson," she says in her rich, deep American voice, that betrays the culture and breeding that is in every line of her face.

"Are you?" he asks a little stupidly.

As a rule Richard is a good conversationalist, but he feels that this woman is good, and that he has the audacity to love her.

"I was pleased with your note," she goes on. "I think that there is a great deal of spiritual retrogression because people are carried away by impulse rather than led to God by His Holy Spirit."

"Yes," says Richard a little vaguely, and then seeing her look at him, he adds, "I am glad that you understand me. I am a Roman Catholic, you know, Miss Irving, and I cannot see how anyone can go to heaven outside the pale of the Church."

"Let us commence right, my brother," says Katherine very gravely. "It is not merely going to heaven; it is living heaven here on earth. You know that the Master said that the kingdom of heaven is among us or within us; and when we know that the Christ takes possession of our souls at the new birth, we know that that is literally true."

"New birth?" says Richard in surprise. "You mean reformation."

"No, regeneration," she answers. "I mean that God can make you a new man; not patch over the old man."

"That is poetry, Miss Irving," Richard says smiling.

"No, my brother, it is science—a science too little understood by the theorists who would reform the world with some philosophy centred in a principle."

"What is yours centred in, Miss Irving?"

"In a Being, my brother; in the Godhead. It is being in tune with the Infinite."

"And how is that accomplished?"

"We are made nigh by the blood of Christ," she quotes; and then softly, "He is our Peace."

"And what of the Catholic Church," asks Richard who is thoroughly in earnest in spite of himself.

"Catholics and the members of every other creed have the same Saviour and meet on a common foot-

Heaven Through a Woman's Heart 25

ing. There is only one church, and Christ is the door to it. I know that some people try to get in through the rungs of Saint Peter's chair; but Christ has said, 'I am the door; by me, if any man enter in he shall be saved.' Let it be Christ, not creed," she says.

"Has your church no creed," asks Richard curiously.

"None whatever, except belief in Christ. My father's church, as well as the mission, stands for an undenominational Gospel. I might spend hours showing you how foolish are the traditions and superstitions of some so-called true churches of God, and how spiritually dead are many infallible guides, but I prefer to lead you to the One who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Controversy has never led a soul to God, but charity covers a multitude of sins."

Richard bows his head. This calm, strong woman looking at him, seems to read and charm his very soul. No woman has ever affected him in this way before. He has been thrilled, infatuated, and dazzled, but this is a different feeling, and he thinks that if he could only kiss her forehead he would be stronger for it.

She looks at him, and, concluding that he is pondering over her words, says in a low voice, "Shall we pray?"

"If you wish to," he answers.

She does not argue the question, trying to probe into his feelings, as a more emotional woman might, but drops on her knees, and pours out her heart in pleading for the salvation of another prodigal son seeking the way to the Father's house.

He listens to her every word, to every intonation of her voice, and a feeling of awe and reverence comes over him, such as he has experienced once or twice in going into some beautiful cathedral at the close of the day. He loves her, but he tells himself that "it is not that." He vaguely wonders what it is, and he is gazing softly at her when she murmurs, "Amen," and rises to her feet.

"I would like you to know my father," she says when they are again seated. "I have spoken to him about you, and he said he would feel it a great pleasure to meet you. By the way, how was it you first came to our church?"

Richard looks a little queerly at her.

"So you have forgotten the little card you gave me at one of your hospital meetings. I was visiting a patient in Bellevue Hospital, and you handed me an invitation to attend what you called a Gospel meeting. That was three months ago, and I have been attending both the church and mission services since."

"Well, I meet so many people, you know," she says a little apologetically—

Heaven Through a Woman's Heart 27

"To be able to remember a plain fellow like me," he concluded.

"Yes," she answers laughing. "You did not strike me as being any one of the distinguished citizens the newspapers speak about."

"What did you think of me?" he asks pursuing the subject.

"Are you vain?" she asks as roguishly as if talking to an intimate girl friend, but with the air of one who is going to say a disagreeable thing.

"No," he replies, a little anxiously.

"Well, I wondered why strong men ever got under the influence of intoxicating liquor."

He flushed, but said not a word.

"You wanted to know," she says almost penitently; "the truth sometimes hurts, but pain and life are of near kin. I will bring you in a cup of tea, and while I am getting it you will decide when to have luncheon with my father."

"And with you," he says hurriedly.

She looks closely at him, and then says laughingly:

"Oh, of course. My father would be helpless without me."

When she brings the tea, he says, "Miss Irving, what do you think of a man who drinks?"

"I pity him," she answers softly but firmly.

"Some fellows do not like to be pitied," he says a little testily.

"Then," and she smiles up at him, "they should not make themselves objects of it."

He pauses a moment, and then says, "They say pity is akin to love. But of course that does not include the Christian's pity for a sinner."

"Yes, the pity that is of God is always a close kin to the love of God—His pity is never contempt." She looks into his eyes with perfect frankness, and if he has any thought of trifling he grows ashamed of it, and says in a confused way, "I will come Thursday if I may, Miss Irving."

"You may, indeed. Let me see, to-day is Saturday. Yes, my father will be at leisure on that day."

"Good-by, you have helped me."

"Ah, I hope I have. Good-by, my brother."

CHAPTER IV

WHERE MARRIAGE WAS A FAILURE

"HELPED me! I will be hanged if she has not helped to make a greater rascal of me," growled Richard under his breath, as he left the parsonage. "I wonder how I can make her love me. Great Scott!" and the perspiration burst out on his forehead as he said it. "If she knew I had a wife the game would be up."

He stood on the corner of the street, and tugged at his mustache violently, as if to find the answer to his perplexed thoughts there. "I will go to see *her*," he said abruptly, and turning around, he retraced his steps, passed the parsonage, went down a side street, and after a walk of a few blocks, boarded a Broadway car.

It was a large, rather imposing flat-house on West Fifty-seventh Street that he paused before, and it was with a frown that made his face look ugly and forbidding that he entered and knocked at the door of an apartment on the second floor. A woman

answered his knock. She was not ill looking, but the trembling lip and flashing eye gave a rather sinister appearance to her face. Her eyes were black, her features well formed, except for the chin, which, was rather pointed and sometimes made the owner look what the janitor called "venomous." Her hair was black; her manner quick and nervous; her hands soft and fair, and her voice a little harsh, though not repelling. This was Richard's wife, and as he entered, she barely reached to his arm.

"Well, dear?" he says a little sarcastically, as he enters.

"Quite well, beloved," she answers in the same vein, and immediately she returns to the fancy work she had left a moment before. He falls into a chair, and, placing one knee across the other, looks at her. Then he lights a cigar, and under its influence he seems to grow genial.

"Where's the boy," he asks presently.

"In bed," is the brief reply.

"Lazy habits like his dad, eh?"

"No, pneumonia," she replies briefly, and she says it as if the news pleases her.

"My God!" cries Richard, dropping his cigar.

"Why didn't you tell me, Jennie?"

"You don't like to be bothered, you know. Business must be attended to, confound it!" she replies

mimicking his tones, as well as using his words of a few days before.

He mutters a curse and draws up his foot as if to kick her, but she gives him a contemptuous look, and he goes into the bedroom. A little boy of five or six, with fair features and heavy brown hair lies on the bed with the traces of tears around the hollow eyes. He is breathing painfully, and Richard goes up to him, his teeth set and a hard look on his face.

"Steve, darling," he says softly.

The child does not answer, and Richard feels a dryness in his throat that he knows no brandy can moisten. He kneels near the bed, reaches out his arms, and takes the sufferer in them.

"Tevie," he says, recalling the baby language of the boy's infantile days, "won't 'oo 'peak to Papa?"

There is no answer, and a feeble groan escapes his lips as he rises to his feet. Returning to the parlor where his wife is sitting, he says quietly, "I am going for a doctor."

"I have had two," she answers. "The crisis is now, and nothing can be done except to pursue the treatment. It will be better if he goes."

"Do not say that!" he cries fiercely; and then he notices that her eyes are filled with tears, and for the first time he sees the look of weariness that long watching has produced.

"You are tired, Jennie," he says, touching her on the shoulder. "Go to bed."

"To bed, and my boy dying," she sobs.

He chokes down the lump in his throat and says gently, "I will take care of him. Do lie down, dear."

"No," she says bitterly, "I have watched him suffer for seventy-two hours; I can see him die now. Oh, God! I wish I was going with him."

Richard hangs his head. When she scolds him he can afford to laugh and sneer, but this has a different effect upon him. He looks at her, hesitates a moment, and then takes her on his lap and draws her wet face over against his breast. He says no word, but takes his handkerchief and dries her face gently, and then caresses it with his hand. She sobs until she is tired and then commences to rebuke him.

"Please stop," he says, the spell of her former gentleness broken. "This will do no good, and it is no time for reproaches. If my boy dies it will break my heart; but," fiercely, "I defy the cruel God who does it."

"Oh, Dick," she cries, putting her hand over his mouth, "don't say that. I have been praying."

He laughs aloud, and says, "What rot!"

"Prayers are answered," she says quietly.

"Oh, perhaps, but not yours. If Steve gets well you will not pray for a year again, or you will not be honester or truer or better. Jennie," mockingly repeating Katherine's words, "you must be born again before you get your prayers in the right key. They don't go above the ceiling yet."

She is sobbing again, and he tries to comfort her, and at last she twines her arms around his neck and nestles close to him.

"Oh, Dick," she sobs, "why can't you be happy with Stevie and me—we love you so much."

"There, there, Jennie, dear," he says soothingly, and the fair, calm face of the girl he has just left rises up before him and causes an almost imperceptible shudder to run through him.

"I would die for you, darling."

"You would, Jennie?"

"Yes."

He is thinking deeply. She is his wife, the mother of the boy, and she loves him. The other one is nothing to him, and she may never love him; she only pities him. Richard frowns. He likes admiration and feels he is worthy of it. He is proud and dislikes pity, and he sneers as he thinks, "Pshaw, *she* only knows missionaries. How can she admire real men?"

"What are you thinking of?" Jennie asks softly.

"Of you," he says, telling the lie smoothly. "Why did you not send for me when Stevie got so sick?"

"I thought," she said frankly, "that it would be punishment to you for your neglect to us both if—if—"

"If he died," he supplements.

"Yes."

"And you love me?" he asks bitterly.

"Yes, Richie dear, but——"

"Ah, yes, I know," he answers, "*in your way.*"

He stands up, and taking her hand in his, they go into the bedroom. Just then the physician comes. All three note the enfeebled breathing, and when Richard seizes the arm of the man of medicine, he replies by saying, "He is going fast."

"Oh, Christ!" gasps the father, throwing himself on the floor.

His wife runs to him, and she and the physician prevail upon him to be calm. Jennie is truly penitent now, and all her love for her husband is manifest. She fondles his head, calls him endearing names, and tells him how Stevie loved him, but all to no purpose. He puts her from him gently, but in a way that forbids her going to him again, and walks up and down the floor as if frenzied. Presently he stops in his walking, and says, "Jennie, I

want you to go to Jersey City for a doctor who lives there; it is our last hope."

"But, Dick, to leave him?"

"Will you do it for me?" he says, and the old fascination in his eye wins her.

"Yes, dear," she says briefly.

He gives her the address and she is gone.

"Now," he says fiercely, "I will risk it."

Like a mad man he runs from the house, boards a Ninth Avenue "L" train, and in less than ten minutes is at the parsonage again.

"Tell Miss Irving I want to see her immediately," he cries excitedly to the woman who answers his ring, and he paces up and down the library until she makes her appearance.

"A little boy is dying," he says abruptly. "I adopted him when he was an infant, and love him as if he were my own. The doctors have failed, and I thought you might pray or might be able to do something."

"I will get Papa," she says, and leaves him.

At another time he would have pleaded for *her* to go, but this is too serious a thing to let even his growing love interfere in. His devotion to his little son is the passion of his life, and he fears madness as he sits idly in the minister's chair while his darling is slowly breathing out his life.

“My God, my God!” he cries, starting to his feet unable to bear the thoughts that crowd his mind.

Just then the Reverend Doctor Irving and his daughter enter, both ready to go with him. She touches his arm softly, the clergyman opens the door to the street without a word, and the three pass out.

CHAPTER V

SEEKING AID FROM THE INVISIBLE

RICHARD hails a passing cab, and in a moment they are whirling through the streets to the tune of a dirge of despair that fills his heart, and which he feels sure they must hear. "Steve is dying, Steve is dying. My little darling is passing away," rings, rings, in the same hopeless strain with every fresh thud of the horses' hoofs. Not a word is spoken. The clergyman is praying silently. Katherine is looking her sympathy, and the man on whose shoulders the load of a city's sorrow seems to be resting, is breathing heavily and moistening his lips with his parched tongue.

Presently the driver comes to a standstill, and Richard springs out, the desperate look of a man who has risked all on his face. He reaches his hand to Katherine, helps her up the steps, opens the door, and runs up the stairs with a hoarse, "this way," given as directions to those accompanying him.

Rushing to the bedroom, he bends down to catch the faint breathing of the dying boy, and feverishly seizes the little wrist and notes the faint pulse.

"He lives, but that is all," he says despairingly, and Katherine goes near to him, seeing with a spiritual insight that he needs her.

The minister of God looks at the boy and at Richard, and then says slowly, "Have you had your sins forgiven, my son? Are you a child of God?"

"No," Richard answers stiffly.

"Do you not believe then that——"

"I believe in the God who raises my boy up," he answers shortly; and then he goes over to Dr. Irving, and, putting his hand on his shoulder, says impressively, "You are a clergyman, and I am a wicked man, but if you raise my boy up I may wear your garb yet. I will give myself to your God."

"Make what promise you will to God, my son, and He may answer. I can promise nothing. I do believe that Christ bore all our infirmities, and that faith in Him can raise even from the dead. Let us pray."

Richard and Katherine kneel side by side; the minister goes to the bedside, lays his hand on the boy in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, the Son of the living God, and with closed eyes tells of the healing of the daughter of Jairus, the casting out

of devils and the raising of the dead by the One who is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

"Do you think Christ can do it?" Richard whispers to Katherine; and she answers him in Christ's own words, "Whether is easier to say, thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, arise and walk?"

"Let us take this by faith, Katherine," her father says in a low voice.

"Yes, Papa. I believe that not only is God able to do this, but that He will do it."

"Blessed be His holy name," says the clergyman, and both heads are bowed in silent prayer.

A faint little cough breaks the solemn stillness, and Richard springs to his feet and rushes for a glass of water which he puts to the child's lips. Slowly, very slowly, a few drops of the cooling draught are swallowed, and then a sigh of relief and the little fellow lifts up his hand over his head, and lies down breathing feebly but naturally.

"Oh, thank you, thank you, Doctor," cries Richard ecstatically, and then he bursts into tears.

The man of God looks at him, and says quietly, "Thank Him," and Katherine goes to the bedside and kisses the little patient on the forehead. Richard sees it and his heart grows warm within him.

"My little adopted son is a good boy, Miss Irving," he says feelingly.

"And you will be worthy of him yet, Mr. Master-son," she answers. "I have caught a glimpse of the big heart God has given you, and I think," this in an earnest friendly voice, "I know you better now."

He does not answer, but takes her hand and presses it, and her father looks down at him, scrutinizing his face as if to read the story of every line and wrinkle on its now pallid surface.

The Reverend Mr. Irving is one of the men who impress every one at first by their great size. He is tall and broad shouldered, but not as big as he really looks. There is an appearance of physical power and prowess about him that even his stooped shoulders cannot take away or his easy, soft voice lessen. He has piercing black eyes, a heavy black beard, a broad, massive forehead, heavy eyebrows, and ponderous fists. His parishioners tell of a time when he was dying of consumption, but sceptics smile when they hear the story of "divine healing," and look at the powerful, vigorous man whose clerical and literary work would drive many a strong business man into nervous prostration.

Richard catches his eye, and for some reason he cowers a little before it.

"I believe the little fellow is better," says the minister, and his voice is soft, deep, and strangely fasci-

nating. "My daughter and I will go now, but we will remember you before our Father. Do not forget your promise to Him. Whenever you want me I will come gladly."

"Thank you, sir," says Richard cordially. "Give me time to think, and do not come before I send for you."

"Very well. And now let me give you a word of advice. Get some one to look after the little fellow and see that you yourself have a good rest. Your nerves are unstrung and are playing out of tune."

Richard promises, shakes hands with both, and gratefully hears them shut the street door.

He peeps through the window, notes the rusty black of the minister's garb and his sturdy appearance, and mutters, "No lantern-jawed missionary there—My stars! but I am glad Jennie has not returned." Then he lies down near his boy, calling him endearing, fond names, and when he notices the fragrance of heliotrope on the little fellow's forehead he puts his lips where Katherine's have rested.

CHAPTER VI

KATHERINE HAS A NOISY VISITOR

"MISS IRVING too tired to see anybody, eh? Well, you just tell her that Denis Switzerdonnerblizen is here and wants to see her immediately, because several of the people at the mission are on fire, and——"

"Oh, sir, that's terrible!" cries Mrs. Gleason, cook and maid of all work, clasping her hands and rolling her eyes furiously. "Sure, 'tis a fit Miss Irving 'll have."

"Thank you for preparing me," says the visitor calmly. "I won't be nervous."

Mrs. Gleason did not hear his response, but ran madly upstairs, her thoughts and tongue flying even faster than her feet, and when she reached the bedroom where Katherine was lying on a couch thinking of the scenes that had just transpired at the bedside of the sick boy, she cried in a loud voice, "The mission and all the people is on fire. Glory be to God!"

"What!" screamed Katherine, springing to her feet, not in a mood to thank God for a wholesale conflagration.

"'Tis thrue. Sure, Misther Fitzensomethingfix-him says so. The firemen are thryin' to do somethin', but 'tis little they can do at all, at all."

"Mrs. Gleason, what is the matter with you?" cried Katherine. "Who told you this?"

"Misther Fitzenfixhim."

"Who?"

"Oh, some Pennsylvania Dutchman that's down stairs. There, he's playing the pianner."

The strain of "You'll Remember Me" fell on Katherine's ears, and she seized a loose travelling cloak, and, throwing it around her, ran down to the parlor and stood still in the doorway, nearly overthrowing Mrs. Gleason, who had maintained full speed behind her.

"They're on fire," said the man at the piano soberly, shaking his head.

"Who? Now, John, what is the matter?"

"I told *her*," John answered soberly, pointing to Mrs. Gleason.

"Yis, yis. He told me that the mission's on fire an' the people burnin', and the fireman can do nothin'."

"Oh, you fibber," said John reproachfully.

"Why did you alarm dear Miss Irving? Why, I merely said, in the calmest way possible, that some of the mission folks were all on fire."

"Well?"

"That was what they told me when I laughed in meeting. My laugh was occasioned by a request for universal prayer that Christians who are happy or ever dare to laugh while others are living in sin, should be brought to see the error of their way by sorrow and grief. Mr. Wallace threw his chest out and said, 'look here, brother, we are zealous for a solemn righteousness and we will have no impish laughter here. We are all on fire for goodness.' Brother Schetze said, 'Yes, und I'm a holy man und vill sdamp mine fut against de vorks off de deffil, for I too am enlightened und feel dat I must pe a purner und a shining light. So pehold I shine und purn und I laugh not.' Why, Miss Irving," continued John, "I thought I ought to come and notify you, as I am not aware that the place is insured."

"John, when will you get sense?" questioned Katherine half crossly, half laughingly. "You nearly frightened me to death."

"Look here," cried Mrs. Gleason, now thoroughly aroused, seeing the deception practised upon her, "isn't your name Dinis Fitzhimasomething?"

"No, madame, I am not a pump that I need a handle of that kind."

"Well, you told me it was."

"Madame," and the visitor stood up and looked

the cook squarely in the eyes, "do you mean to tell me that my name is Denis-Fitzhimasomething?"

"Well, 'twas like it," Mrs. Gleason answered hotly, "an' 'tis a haythen an' not a Christian ye'are to come here wid lies about fire."

"And 'tis you that ought to be ashamed of yourself to add the tale about the firemen. Fie, fie! And then to tell me that Miss Irving was too tired to see anybody, when she came down those stairs, three steps at a time. I think I ought to have a word with you about breaking a certain commandment."

"Do not mind him, Mrs. Gleason," said Katherine, now fully alive to the humor of the situation. "This is Mr. Pierce, and that was only his original way of getting to see me in spite of your objections."

"Misther John Pierce? The gentleman what your father sez lives nearer to heaven than any man he knows?" literally yells Mrs. Gleason.

Katherine is slightly embarrassed, but not so, John. He sees Mrs. Gleason's startled countenance and asks roguishly, "And now, madame, on which side is my heaven?"

"T'other side," answers Mrs. Gleason shortly, and she leaves the room amid the laughter of her hearers.

"Now, John, what made you come here to wake me up from my sweet dreams of peace?" said Katherine when they were left alone,

"Well, they did not want me at the mission, and I concluded you would. So here I am."

"But I did not, for I was tired," answered Katherine, pretending to look very cross but failing dismally.

"Well, so was I. Now, lie down on the couch and I will fan you if you read to me afterwards while I have a rest."

"Oh, cease your nonsense, John," said Katherine laughing.

"Nonsense! Well, Katherine, if you were shaken up for your sins by a Dutchman; sent out of the 'Land of Canaan' by a converted Jew; told you were a 'theological ninny' by a Scotchman; and literally frozen out through a keyhole by a woman whose very appearance told you she knew every version of the Bible extant, you would not feel very nonsensical."

"Who was she, and what did she do to you?" asked Katherine laughing.

"I call her Charity-Gone-Astray, as that is the only name I knew her by. She was leading a 'meeting for Christians' at the mission, and after giving everybody a free dinner, she spoke about the great work God has for His children to do, and that He does not want them mixed up with the world in any secular work. They ought all to be preachers and

prayers. I will impersonate her for a moment, Katherine."

Here, John got up, and in a high falsetto voice he told his story, closing every word with a hissing sound. This was the burden of his message:

" 'Many Christians, dear ones, are working merely to support the flesh when they ought to be singing in the Garden of Eden. The church and not the business office is a Christian's place.'

"Yes," this in his natural voice, "I answered, and there are lots of so-called missionaries and false teachers who ought to be earning an honest living, and emulating Jesus the carpenter, and Paul the tent-maker, by exalting labor and righteousness. God never intended us all to be preachers, but we are all to be doers of the word."

" 'Be careful of the flesh, brother.'

" 'Oh, I will leave that to the members of your Holy Society for the Prevention of Honest Labor. They will let nothing hurt it.'"

" 'Oh, the insidious flesh!' a hiss.

" 'Oh bother, madame,' said I, really going farther than I intended to, 'God gave it to us. I suppose it is better than putty.' Here I laughed, and at this point I was attacked on all sides. A fat old woman in the back of the room misquoted solemnly and irreverently, 'As for me and my house,

we will pray and not work, for good works will not enter Heaven.' This was followed by a pensioner of your father, who said, 'Go ye and see visions and dream dreams and drive the enemy from the land, ay even this man who laughs is a Jebusite.' The organist said, 'The harvest of fools and critics are many'; and not being able to contain myself any longer, I quoted, 'Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled.' This was ignored by the lady leader, who reminded her hearers, who were all shaking their heads by this time, that they were to ignore the flesh always; but the Cherman brudder announced the second time that he was on fire, and this time it was mit a desire to put me out, an' I had better retire. So I did."

"John, John," says Katherine, almost in convulsions, "you have mortally offended Mrs. de Rutyer. She is the principal support of our mission."

"I don't care if she is the floor and cellar," said John. "She has no right to be encouraging a lot of lazy fellows who need to remember that God wants shoemakers and hod-carriers and carpenters as well as missionaries. God has given each one of us a talent and we are to use that, and not attempt to counterfeit someone else's."

"True," assents Katherine, "but she does not see it in that way."

"Then I will lend her my spectacles. If she is sincere, and I believe she is, my talk will do her good. Think of her going there week after week with bananas and roly-polys and gooseberry sandwiches, and asking a lot of lazy pilgrims what St. Paul's thorn in the flesh was."

"Now, John, every week?"

"Honor bright, Katherine. And the old rascals answer each time in the same piping voices, as if they heard the question for the first time. 'We believe it was either because he was a tent-maker or had an unconverted wife, Ma'am.'"

Katherine laughs loud and long, John seizes her hand, and just then her father enters and joins in the contagious mirth.

"What has John done now?" he asks, peering under his heavy eyebrows at the culprit, who drops Katherine's hand hastily, and looks almost as confused as she does before her father's amused gaze.

"Crossed theological swords with Mrs. de Ruyter," gasps Katherine, very glad that he asked that question and not another.

The Doctor rubs his shaggy head and a suspicion of a smile crosses his face, but he says nothing except to ask, "How did it end?"

"It may end by Mrs. Gleason poisoning me. She looked at me as if I was a fiend incarnate when she left the room. I say, Katherine, ask me to stay to tea so as to give her a chance."

"Yes, do stay. You need to be strengthened for the work before you, for you have plunged headlong into a hornet's nest."

"May I come here every time I am stung?" he says in a whisper; but low as it is said, the Doctor hears it and smiles. He smiles again when Katherine answers:

"No, John, I will give you a chance to be martyred. You are too good for this world."

"But not too good for you," says John roguishly.

"Oh, yes, far too good. If you belonged to me I would worry to death for fear you would suddenly fade from my sight in a mist of your own goodness."

"I do belong to you, Katherine," he whispers in a low voice.

Katherine blushes, and her father lays down the book he has been pretending to read, and says with a twinkle in his deep, black eyes, "What a troublesome possession you have, Katherine."

CHAPTER VII

A DISCUSSION OF CHINATOWN AND ITS CONVERTS

WHEN the three friends sat down to tea John displayed a great interest in the saying of the grace and in the hem of his napkin, and the weight of the quadruple-plate knives and forks. He coughed oftener than etiquette would consider right, moved his feet under the table, and even struck his knee nervously with his hand. Truth to tell, he felt uneasy about Dr. Irving's remark. He was not prepared for the revelation of his feelings the clergyman received in that little remark meant for Katherine's ears alone, and he wondered how it was taken. Would the Doctor, in that calm way of his, say, "I would not see John so much in future if I were you, Katherine." And would Katherine accept her father's good judgment in this as in everything else? The very thought of it made a creepy sensation find its way up John's back, and prevented his appreciating the sarcastic head-shakes of Mrs. Gleason as she passed by him, though she was extremely anxious that he should see them.

"How solemn he is before the parson and *her*, th' ould hypocrit!" was her mental remark as she left the dining-room.

"What do you think of the work of the mission in general, John?" asked Dr. Irving, arousing the dreamer from his dull, brown study.

"I think it is like everything else in the world—half good and half bad," said John frankly. "We need less of self-glorification down there. I wish this glorying about conversions was done away with; there is far too much of it."

The minister ran his fingers through his long, thick hair, as was his wont, but said nothing; and Katherine noting his perplexity said, "Explain yourself, John."

"Well, Katherine," said John earnestly, "I for one object to the giving of testimonies that speak of one's past life."

"So do I," said Katherine quietly, "and this morning's post proves to me that I am right. I have a letter here from Alice Masland, who was converted at the Rescue Home a year ago, and who has been so very strong in her determination for the right ever since. She says, 'I am sick and tired of it all. I have testified about my past life in public until the very stones in the street seem to say, "One year, two weeks, and three days an honest woman." Everyone

knows me. I have advertised myself as a horrible example, and have pictured myself in such bad colors that I no longer want to look upon the picture. One person has whispered to another about me until I find my Christian life not a pilgrim's progress but a criminal's dress parade.' "

"Shocking!" cried John. "Upon my word, it is nearly as bad as the mediæval methods of reformation that prescribe moral efforts in homœopathic, and penance and solitude in allopathic doses."

"The church has never been quite right on this question," said Dr. Irving, slowly. "We are only faintly sighting the dawn of the morning. It would be well if we, like Christ, were seekers of individuals rather than organization builders. It is this love of glory, this enthroning of self, that makes these industrious builders get up their statistics of famous converts, famous methods, and famous proofs of their rights to heaven. They argue with each other whether their opposing proselytes and their converts are honest or not, instead of doing the work of the One whom they say sent them."

"I know that it is only the Word of God that converts, and yet I would not care to say that 'testimony' giving should be stopped," said Katherine, pausing between every word. "I have heard of people who declared that they were led to God

because others had told how their evil habits were broken, and how their souls were redeemed from slavery. I am afraid that recounting one's sins is apt to keep one living in their atmosphere and make them take a peculiar kind of pride in their past wickedness; and I am afraid, too, that in many instances it takes away that sensitiveness to sin that is so necessary. Oh, we ought to point forward to the light, and not backward at the unspeakable darkness."

"She has your conservatism and cool judgment, Doctor," said John, and it would be difficult to tell which man looked the proudest just then.

"We are in God's work for His glory and for the benefit of our brothers and sisters, who are truly that, if He is our Father," said Katherine; "and God forbid that we should do anything to hinder His plans. We must study this thing closely and sift our work of all that is wrong. We must study the problems that meet us at every step in the haunts of the poor. To truly help my sister, I must know her, feel with her, understand what makes her cry and lie awake at night, and I must seek the things that make her laugh and give to her the sleep that even her babyhood was deprived of."

Not a word was said for a moment, and then John asked: "Where is Alice?"

"I sent her to the country, and not even to you, John, will I tell where. My poor Alice must begin anew, and in a happier way."

"Did you tell John about your children's work, Katherine?" asked her father presently.

"Oh, no, and John you must help me; you *do* play the banjo so sweetly."

"Oh, you flatterer," said John. "Why, it is only a week ago since you said my playing sounded like a lame horse's gallop on a wet road."

"But my little girls will never know that, they love noise so, and you can get that out of it."

"And where am I to go as the apostle of noise, pray?" asked John, turning up the whites of his eyes.

"To Chinatown."

"Oh, I have no doubt but what I will be in keeping with the crowds there. But where is it? In San Francisco?"

"No, it is right here in New York. Pell, Doyer, Mott, Baxter Streets, Chatham Square, and the surrounding streets go to make it up. I have suggested to some of the young girls I have met in my visiting, the organizing of a club; and I think they will fall in with my idea. The children are the next generation, and we must reach them and save them."

"And what can I do to help you besides making noise," asked John, secretly rejoicing that he was given the opportunity to do some good, and that she had chosen him in preference to some one else.

"You can tell funny stories, laugh as loud as you can, meet the children's fathers when they are going to the saloons, and without preaching prove to them that a Christian is a happy being. Do as you have done in the Twenty-third Street mission, John, and that is all I will ask of you."

"That reminds me," said John, a little embarrassed, in spite of his usual equanimity, "that that young man who has been attending our services so long is not converted yet. I mean the tall man in gray who talks with you so frequently."

"No, though I think he will be soon," said Katherine.

"What do you think of him, John?" asked Dr. Irving.

"I have no right to have an opinion about any man that is not well founded, Doctor," answered John looking grave. "He is, perhaps, a great deal better than his environment. Poor fellow!"

"You dear, good, old John, that is just like you," said Katherine; but somehow John wished she had not said it. Had she felt it and kept silent he would have more hopes of having his dreams realized than

he had at this particular moment. And yet she looks at him as she does at no one else; ah, well, who knows a woman's heart?

"Biscuit?" said Mrs. Gleason, suddenly, at his elbow.

"That is not my name, Mrs. Gleason," he answered with pretended stiffness. "You seem to have picked me out as a special target to-day."

"I?" cried Mrs. Gleason in surprise, the false fringe she wore looking dangerously near breaking its last hold on the tiny hair-pin that held it.

"Yes, you. You have purposely insulted me and misrepresented my statements," and John commenced to devour his biscuit angrily.

"Yer a madman, that's what y'are."

"Baa!" yelled John, suddenly springing from his chair, and down went Mrs. Gleason's tray and Mrs. Gleason herself with a crash that sounded as if the roof had fallen in, for the parsonage cook was of a goodly size.

Katherine and John helped her to rise, while the Doctor lay back in his chair and roared, in spite of his feeble but dignified attempts at restraint.

"Ye'll pay for my chayney, that's what ye will, ye omadhawn," puffed the now disgruntled woman.

"You'll pay for a libel suit," retaliated John.

"I'll pay for a suit ornamented with sthripes for

ye," answered Mrs. Gleason, and she left the room not a little proud of her own wit, and very much determined that John would not get inside the door of the parsonage for many a day to come.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FINNEGAN ASSOCIATION

KATIE FINNEGAN lived in Chinatown, but Chinatown did not inspire the patriot's love of home in Katie Finnegan. Higher ideals than the neighborhood had ever fostered filled Katie's heart, and a thousand new emotions careened through her fourteen-year old body when she discovered that girls might have a club as well as boys.

"Say, Sadie, it's a bang up ting, dis club business," she declared to Sadie Cohen who disturbed her meditations by stepping on her foot. "Miss Irving, w'at used to visit me aunt, says girls can start one, an' I saw in wan o' de papers dat ders a club o' dames called Soceresses. Say, Sadie, can't we do someting on dat line, hey?"

"Well, I should say so," commented Sadie, and the club was immediately started.

"I'll be president," declared Katie, "an' you be vice-president. Let's elect ourselves." And they did, Katie voting for Sadie and Sadie for Katie.

Next day a careful canvass was made of the neighborhood with the result that twenty-five little girls, representing all shades and conditions of society, congregated that night at the house of Señor Dominico. Dominico was a night watchman, and as his thirteen-year-old daughter Lizzie was his sole housekeeper, the club was sure of hospitable shelter in his absence. Katie Finnegan sat on the table, waited until the prospective members were all seated around, and then announced, "We're a club an' I'm president. See?"

"Oh! I see," cried Mollie Angelico, the organ-grinder's heiress, "but who made ye wan?"

"Meself, o'course," was the dignified answer, "who'd ever think o' askin' Mrs. King Humbert who made her queen o' Italy?"

"Sure," assented several loyal Italian subjects, and no more objections were raised.

"Sadie Cohen is me vice. I guess we'll elect de udder officers right away."

"Ah, give the club a name first," objected Mattie Foy, a Chinese belle who chewed gum complacently and looked as if she knew as much as the president.

"Shut up, you! Yer only a wisitor," ordered the president. "Would ye go about makin' a box wid-out nails or wood?"

"Well, who'll elect dem, den?" questioned Mattie again.

"I will."

"Phew! Haint we got nottin' to say?"

"No! Would ye send a feller to yer sick mudder w'at never juggled wid medicine? I understand votin', see? An' you don't, see?"

"Yes, I see," mimicked Mattie; "but I haint agoin' to go up agin any one-horse affair, see?"

"Horses had to come before trolley-cars," said the president gravely.

"Say," whispered Carrie Schmeerkase to Angelina Moccihay, "she talks in parables."

"An' what's parables?" asked the puzzled Angelina.

"Oh, dey're Bible t'ings w'at makes you guess t'ings you can't understand," replied Carrie; and the president, who was listening, sweetly smiled approval.

"Suppose me and me vice adjourn," said the president, and they did by going into the little dark bedroom off the kitchen to discuss the important affairs of the club.

"Sadie, dis Mattie Foy is goin' to make us trouble unless we make her one of us," shrewdly said the president. "I guess we'll call her in an' manage her."

"Good plan," commented the "vice," and Mattie was called in.

"Mattie, I nominate and 'lect ye for treasurer, an' yer chum, Maggie Laviniso, for sec'tary of our new club," said the politic president, smiling suavely.

"Good for you!" said Mattie, growing red with pleasure.

"Now, yer to stand wid us; a piece o' bread cut up is only crumbs, y' know."

"I know," asserted the treasurer. "Sure 'nough, horses had to come before trolleys."

"An' now," said the diplomatic president, "we'll let de club pick out a name. *We* won't say a t'ing, and de guys will t'ink dey're doin' de whole t'ing."

"Bully for you, president!" said Mattie; "den, when dey're in good humor we can take up de collection like de churches do."

"Ye mean de fee; dat's good, dat's good," and the president nodded her head at the sagacious suggestion.

The members cried out name after name, but the president never smiled until the "Finnegan Association" was suggested, when she beamed and the name was adopted. Then Mattie winked at the other officers, stood up and said: "Katie Finnegan bosses dis affair. She's de whole t'ing; w'at she says goes. She's goin' to make a set o' rules; we're goin' to pay de fees, give chowder parties, have a good time, an' l'oin. Maybe we'll call at de Sorceress Club to

see how dey do t'ings and we'll decide next week wedder we'll pray or not. I t'ink de Jews might pray one week, de Catlics de next, and de Mefodists de next."

"We'll adjoin on dat; put out de lights," commanded the august voice of President Finnegan.

CHAPTER IX.

LIZZIE KELLY REFUSES TO BE BRIBED AND THE CLUB RECEIVES VISITORS

It was Friday evening when the Finnegan Association assembled again, and the members wore an anxious look on their faces, which clearly showed that they were already feeling the great responsibility of their positions.

Sadie Cohen was thoughtfully stroking her nose, and probably wondering what caused it to grow in a different direction from that of her neighbors. Mattie Foy entered rather late, and smiled sweetly at the president who sat at the head of the table looking grave, and a few other members hemmed and hawed and looked wise.

"Loidies of de Finnegan Association," commenced the president, "I commences by commencin' the meetin'."

"I second de motion," commented Mollie Angelico.

"Well, yer don't need to, an' yer out er order, so dere," answered the president.

Lizzie Kelly Refuses to be Bribed 65

"Oh, well, dat's better dan to be out er sense," retorted Mollie.

"Come off! come off!" yelled treasurer Mattie Foy in stentorian tones.

"I'm on to *your* game, Treasurer Foy!" replied Mollie, with a shrewd wink that spoke whole libraries, and Mattie jumped to her feet.

"Here, loidies," interrupted President Finnegan, "dis won't do. Private feelin's must be kept out o' public places. I was goin' to say dat we commenced dis meetin' by payin' our dues. We'll pay five cents a month. Come, chip in!"

The basket was passed around and upon examination was found to contain sixty cents, whereupon the president remarked that that would not do, as there were twenty members present.

"Dat's all right," declared a bright-faced girl in the back of the room, "but I ain't agoin' to pay my dues 'till the treasurer is put under bonds."

"Oh, she'll go to Canada wid yer nickel. Tie her to de leg o' de bed—de clothes line will make good bonds."

"Yer a bird."

These and similar expressions characteristic of the neighborhood greeted the member's statement, but she looked around scornfully at them all, and said with a sneering curl of her upper lip: "I don't know

everyt'ing under the sun, I'm only Lizzie Kelly, member, while some o' yez are treasurers, an' sec'tarys, an' grand Lord Elephants; but I know what's right, an' I does what's right. I'll pony up, but I'll have no funny business; fun is fun."

"Huh," thought President Finnegan, "here's another one. I'll fix her, too." Aloud she said, "De member will please step wid me in de next room."

"Not me," said Lizzie. "Yez can't bribe me by makin' me general coat-tail puller or some such t'ing. What ye've got to say, say it here."

"Good for you, Lizzie." "Bully for you, Lizzie," were a few of the exclamations following this remark, going to prove that public opinion changes as quickly in Chinatown as anywhere else.

"I was only goin' to say," said the shrewd president, "dat ye can resign if ye don't like dis club's way of doin' t'ings."

"Oh, I can do dat," said Lizzie; "but before I go I'll say dat yer a fine president—in yer mind—dat de members are as blind as door knobs not to be able to see yer little game, and dat ye'd better hurry up yer meeting, because I'm goin' to tell Mister Dominico dat Lizzie has let his house to dis crazy gang."

"I'll call on ye to-morrer, Lizzie," said the president.

"If ye do, I'll set me 'dog at yez," answered Lizzie.

Lizzie Kelly Refuses to be Bribed 67

"Ye'll play no ward politics around me. I'm honest, I am."

"And that is right," said a voice behind Lizzie, and the club members were startled to see a pale-faced, brown-eyed young woman, dressed in black, standing in the doorway beside a tall, dark-haired young man, armed with a banjo.

"She's Miss Irving from de mission round de corner," said one of the members audibly, and the president got down from her chair and welcomed her, hoping that this interruption would stay Lizzie's wrath and her consequent visit to Señor Dominico.

"Girls," said Katherine, "I heard Lizzie say that she was honest. Who can tell me what honesty really is?"

"It's a ting ye read about, but seldom see," said the president.

"Ye hear a lot about it at 'lection time," said the secretary.

"'Tis scarcer than diamonds," added a frivolous member.

"Yez only find it in de dictionary," cried another.

"Girls, honesty is one of the noblest gifts of God," said Katherine. "It is always where He is, and there are more kinds than one. An honest life does not simply mean that you are not to steal, but it means that you are to be true in purpose, in life,

and in every action—clear and above board, unselfish and mindful of one another.”

“Say, dat’s all nice *talk*, Miss,” said President Finnegan, “but tink o’ livin’ dat!”

“Yes, I love to think of living that, Katie,” said Katherine, who knew all of the girls. “As president, you ought to wish your club to be so; as your friend, I want it to be so; and the Lord can make it so. May I pray about it?”

“Cert,” said the president, and after some deliberation and a good deal of persuasion, the members got on their knees.

Katherine prayed and prayed until the bad feeling melted into thin air, and when the girls arose sheepishly, brushing the dust from their knees, Lizzie Kelly shook hands with the president, and the president, smiling softly, said, “Ladies, I wasn’t rightly ’lected. Do yez want me as yer president? Aye means yes, and no means not a bit of ye. Vote, please.”

“Aye,” “Yes,” “No,” “I guess not,” “Yer all right,” came in quick succession, and Katherine saw that the members were voting “aye” and “no” together; so she requested a showing of hands, with the result that Katie was unanimously elected, and just as quickly her three fellow-officers were voted out of office, as Katie confessed there had been political double-dealing.

Lizzie Kelly Refuses to be Bribed 69

"Say, I guess she's converted," whispered Aggie Murphy to Carrie Schmeerkase. "De squint in her left eye don't look half so bad."

"Let's adjoin till next week. I'm all broke up," said the president in a shaky voice, and, as the members gravely rose from their seats, Aggie again whispered, "She'll be givin' her testament next week at de mission."

"Ye mean her testimony," said Carrie. "I hope not. I was mixed up in lots o' her little games. Let's pray dat she gets sense."

"Let de feller wid de banjo give us a tune. Say, mister, play 'Down went McGinty,'" pleaded a member who did not take kindly to the suggestion to "adjoin," and John sat on a chair, threw back his head and "did Dan into music," as he himself phrased it, to the intense delight of his audience. He responded to the encore by playing "Sweet Rosie O'Grady" and "Down the Mobile," and, as he was swinging his head and puffing out his lips and grinning broadly to illustrate the Mobile negro, the door opened and in came Richard Masterson. Katherine motioned him to her side, shook hands with him, and whispered some particulars about the club without questioning him about his presence in the neighborhood.

Just then John ceased playing, and after the

hearty laughter and applause had subsided, President Finnegan suggested that "de new gent sing somethin'." Katherine and John added their requests to this, and Richard flushed slightly, but stepped forward, and in a clear tenor voice, quivering with a real emotion that touched every one of his listeners, sang, "The Bird with the Broken Wing." His voice faltered visibly when he gave expression to the words, "But the bird with the broken pinion never soared as high again," and, somehow, the little girls, into whose lives no emotion ever entered that was not connected with funerals or lack of food, felt the tears gathering in their eyes, and from that moment there was a silent understanding between them that they "liked the gent in gray."

"I *had* to see you to-night," he said, seating himself beside Katherine, when John commenced to propound some of his humorous riddles to the club. "I was at the parsonage, and they directed me here; so I came, for I knew that I must see you."

"Why?" asked Katherine, and her heart beat with the glad thought of his possible conversion.

"Because, I—I——."

He hesitated, drooped his head, and then whispered, "I am better when I am near you."

"How is the little boy?" she asked, looking curi-

Lizzie Kelly Refuses to be Bribed 71

ously into his face, as if to read there what she could not understand in his reply.

"He is well—quite well, almost; it is a miracle. Oh, Miss Irving, I wish I was good. I would give anything under the sun to be as good as you are." And he meant it just then.

Richard was not a thoroughly bad man any more than any other man is. He was morally weak, self-indulgent, and headstrong. He had always been used to having his own way, and he saw no sensible reason for exercising self-control or depriving himself of anything he could obtain; but there were times, such as the present, when a hatred of deceit and wrong and sin in general shook his inner being with a holy longing that was pathetic—and brief. He really meant what he said. He reasoned, too, that Katherine would be pleased with the thought of being the means of his conversion, and, "really," he thought, "there is no harm in my loving her. I mean no wrong. I will seek an ideal love in her free from everything debasing, and why should my wife deprive me of the affection of a good woman. I will tell her some day of Jennie, but just yet—well, really, I mean no harm."

"I came to tell you," he said, "that I decided to live for God an hour ago—you showed me the way so clearly that I could not fail to find it. I am converted, Miss Irving, and am very happy."

"Oh, I do thank God," said Katherine, and, when the tears dimmed her soft eyes, Richard repeated, "I am happy; oh, so happy, and I feel so, so—good." And Richard really did have a little holiness of his own manufacture. Instead of the sense of sin the true convert feels, he felt that goodness belonged to him from his birth upwards, only his life was full of mistakes—that was all.

Katherine whispered the story to John while the club was singing a selection of Miss Finnegan's, and Richard wished that he might be baptized and wear a white robe, and look classic and saintly, in Katherine's eyes at least.

"I am glad, and give you a hearty welcome into the kingdom, Mr. Masterson," said John, shaking his hand. "I will be glad to be a friend to you."

"I need none, but thank you all the same," said Richard, a trifle testily. He had seen John before with Katherine, and took the liberty of telling himself that he did not like it very much.

Richard lingered over his parting hand-shake with Katherine, and as he went homeward said to himself, "I will not go near the saloon to-night. I may sell the place or give it up, but I must do nothing hastily. I do not want to be dependent upon anybody, and—well, there are worse things than saloon-keeping. I don't care to drink to-

Lizzie Kelly Refuses to be Bribed 73

night, but I feel the need of something. Oh, a little drop will not harm me. I believe I *am* better after all." And the convert drained a full glass of brandy, but utterly refused to let himself have another. Then he went to bed and dreamt of Katherine, and declared, as he kissed her forehead in his dreams, that he "really meant no harm."

As he was making his way to his home Katherine was telling John, for at least the twentieth time in her life, that he must not say certain things to her, because she was wedded to her work among the poor; and yet, when he went away with a downcast look on his usually bright face, she said, "Poor, poor John!" Perhaps, after all, there was more than one kind of "poor" to be wedded to. Women have queer meanings for a great many words.

CHAPTER X

HOW A MOUSE SQUELCHED A DOMESTIC TYRANT

MRS. GLEASON peeped out cautiously when the bell rang about ten o'clock the next morning. She wanted to be sure that John would not slip by her, for she had vowed over and over that unless he came in and "begged her parding like a dacent man, not a fut would he get inside the threshold." She was relieved when the tall, graceful figure of Richard loomed up before her vision, and when he removed his hat and asked if he might trouble her to take his card to Miss Irving, she mentally remarked that "that was the way gentlemen did."

Richard was a little embarrassed when he found that in his hurry he had brought a business card, telling of the whereabouts of a certain liquor saloon he did not care to be reminded of just then, instead of the card he had intended bringing; but, with a reassuring smile and a soft remark about the carelessness of a man who is not blessed with women folk, he set Mrs. Gleason's mind at ease, and she

How a Mouse Squelched a Tyrant 75

assured him that "a gentleman's name is better any day than his card."

Katherine was a little nervous and troubled when she came downstairs. There was no reason why she should be, and the only excuse she could find for such a state of mind was that for some reason she did not sleep well the previous night. John's awful music would keep ringing in her ears, in spite of all her efforts to drown it. Of course, she would not admit that John's voice or his words had anything to do with it.

"I feared you might not be at home, Miss Irving," said Richard. "It is rather early to call, but I felt as if I needed strength and encouragement."

"I am glad you came, brother," she said, heartily. "After a while you will learn to go to the dear Lord for both. He is a very present help in trouble."

They were both silent. Richard wished that some bright thought would come to him, and wondered why every spark of intelligence seemed to have left him and why he almost dreaded to look up. When he did look up he saw that Katherine was calmly looking down at him with a glad smile that made him turn away like a guilty man whose heart had been laid bare. Perhaps she saw he was embarrassed, for she said presently, "I will play something," and, being unable to think of anything

else just then, she placed her fingers on the keys with a silvery touch that woke the music of the "Maiden's Prayer," and made Richard's heart beat with a strange, exultant feeling. Somehow or other, he felt that she was playing for him, not to him. But this was not the only time Richard made a mistake in his calculations and suffered for it in the reckoning. Conceited people need this sort of treatment, however.

"I wonder what her prayer was?" he asked, softly, when the last note had fallen on the stillness of the room.

"I have often wondered," Katherine answered. "Whatever it was, it carried with it triumphant faith—the last part is so full of praise. To me it sounds like a peal of thanksgiving."

"If I were a composer I could create even a greater prayer than that. If I could put my soul on paper *now*, it would sing a grander message," said Richard, looking down at her.

"God understands your soul, my brother."

"But you—do you?"

"I—I do not know," she answered, looking at him in a puzzled sort of way; "but the Word says that if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another."

"Fellowship with you!" he said in a low voice,

How a Mouse Squelched a Tyrant 77

and, seeing her look at him strangely, he added, "fellowship with God's people is a new experience for me."

"And a blessed one, I hope?" said Katherine, her face brightening.

"You need scarcely ask that," he answered, and then his knowledge of the world came to his aid, and he whispered to himself: "Be careful, Richard; if you frighten her now, you may lose her forever. Be pious and interesting; time will do the rest." Then he looked at Katherine and said: "I am afraid I will bore you terribly, but you are the only Christian woman I know, and it seems so good to have you talk to me. It helps me."

"And my father and I will always have a warm welcome for you," said Katherine, with a rare smile on her face that Richard longed to catch and imprison. He was glad to listen to her voice, so he let her talk while he looked at her and dreamed and longed for things his own reason told him were impossible. Something in his soul called him a rascal, and he did not contradict the little voice, but how could he help loving her, he asked himself, when she was sitting so near to him and looking so beautiful?

"Is the way of Life clear to you now, Mr. Masterson?" she asked, earnestly, after she had, as she

thought, clinched her facts, which were all in defence of the Bible as the inspired word of God.

"Life?" he repeated vaguely, for he had not heard one word of her argument. "Surely, God understands my difficulties."

A clatter in the hall, the sound of a struggle, a wild scream, and, a moment later, a dishevelled-looking young man burst into the room, bowing toward the hall and saying, "Yours truly, wide awake."

"John, you horrible fellow," cried Katherine, but she felt sure she had never been so glad to see him before. For some reason or another she is always saying this same thing about John now.

Richard frowned, and a heaviness fell on his heart, while an ugly little demon known as the green monster told him that only for John he would be beloved. But, since monsters of any particular shade of color are not addicted to truth-telling, it was not surprising that this one said things without much regard to facts.

"Katherine protect me, and I will buy you the handsomest engagement ring in town," John cries.

"What is the matter, John?"

"Oh, that Hebe of yours attempted to keep me out. I knew she would, so I came armed with a mouse, and when she was about to shut the door I put the little fellow on her shoulder, and she fled."

How a Mouse Squelched a Tyrant 79

This was too much even for Richard's gloom, and he joined Katherine in the laugh that did not make Mrs. Gleason any sweeter. Down in the kitchen she was nursing her wrath, and wondering nervously if the mouse really ran down the hall or down her back, and, when she suddenly decided for the latter, she announced her decision with a scream that was piercing in its intensity.

The three in the little parlor fled to the lower regions, and found the cook jumping around as if she were on a hot griddle.

"Down my back," she roared, and Richard's sympathy overcame his good sense, and he poked a stick down the back of her neck.

"Oh, he'll never come up now," screamed the cook, and John ran for a pail of water, saying he would drown him.

"Get him up first," she roared.

"No, I'll drown him where he is," he cried, and when the uproar was at its height, the Reverend Doctor Irving appeared in the doorway.

"It's me spine, I feel it, I feel it, the stick made him move," cried Mrs. Gleason all in one breath.

"Katherine, is she mad?" asked the minister.

"Oh, for the love o' heaven, get him up, Miss Irving," cried the cook, and Katherine, with a look on her face that was desperate and determined, put

her hand down the cook's back. The two men stood with expectant faces, and the minister looked as puzzled as if he had suddenly come face to face with the sphinx. Katherine dimly realized that never again could she be a girl or a woman. Had she smoked a cigarette, or put on a "dress reform suit" or made a speech at a woman's suffrage convention, she might return to the fold, but never after having deliberately sought to catch a mouse.

"Right there," yelled the cook.

Katherine set her teeth hard, and drew forth into the garish light of day—one of the little false curls that adorned Mrs. Gleason's neck on state occasions.

"Ow! ow! ow!" roared Mrs. Gleason.

"Bow-ow! Was it with his mouth he bit you?" cried John, and he fled, followed by Richard and the clergyman. Katherine followed a few moments later, and fell into a chair, where she shook with the suppressed laughter that was threatening to consume her.

"Brave old Katherine," said John, going over and kneeling before her. "My hand and my heart are yours. Why, the 'pied piper of Hamlin' could not hold a rushlight to you."

"You wicked boy," cried Katherine, boxing John's ears soundly, and Richard felt as if he would give a good deal to have her do the same to him.

How a Mouse Squelched a Tyrant 81

Then he groaned in spirit, and again the little demon whispered in his ear.

When Richard explained to the minister the cause of the comedy drama enacted down-stairs, John looked serious, and the tenderness and justness that were such a large part of his character overcame his love of the ludicrous.

"I will go down and apologize to Mrs. Gleason," he said. "I am afraid that I have offended her, more especially as I was the cause of revealing the fact that her hair did not all grow on her head."

"Yes, John, I think you ought," said the minister. "Fun ought never to overstep itself by making another unhappy. I do not mind your having taught Mrs. Gleason a lesson, for she is a veritable autocrat and needs chastening; but I fear her lesson has been too severe this time."

When John went to the kitchen he found its mistress in tears. There was real sorrow in his voice though his eye twinkled, and when he said he deeply regretted what had occurred she believed him.

"Did you see what was down my back?" she asked, looking him full in the face.

"How could I see?" he answered, evasively.

"Oh, I mane what Miss Katherine brought up."

"Yes," said John, though he wished he could truthfully say otherwise.

" Oh, what a shame ! " cried the poor cook.

" It is all right, Mrs. Gleason," said John kindly.

" Let us both learn a lesson from it. The false cannot pass for the true, and we should never wear anything on our heads or in our hearts that God and the world should not see. But, then, false hair is better than a bald head. You look well with curls, too."

" Let us be friends," she said, impulsively.

And so an armistice was declared.

CHAPTER XI.

RICHARD PROVOKES A DISCUSSION

AT luncheon Mrs. Gleason did not appear, and John bravely resisted giving vent to his description of the images that were filling his mind. His friend constantly told him that he ought to be a writer of comedies and a maker of funny cartoons, because he always saw the comic side of everything. And it was so. His heart was big, but his brain was a busy workman, and even when the sympathies of the one were aroused, the pictures of the other filled the larger part of the scene.

He was seated near Katherine, or near Katherine's chair, for she was busily engaged in pouring out tea and taking the remainder of the luncheon from Mrs. Gleason and deftly conveying it to the sideboard. Richard looked at her, and then at John.

"They are well suited to each other," he commented mentally. He looked again, and this was what he saw: A woman, small even for a woman, for she was scarcely five feet four, but lithe, grace-

ful, and strong looking. A woman with large brown eyes, half grave and half roguish—eyes that were mischievous as well as thoughtful; a full, rather large mouth; a straight, well-formed nose, and a strong chin with just a touch of weakness that the curbing of a clear but restless soul would yet take away. Her hair was parted in the centre, and waved softly over the broad forehead—the forehead that resembled her father's so much.

The man was tall, big, and boyish-looking. His eyes were grey, his nose a short snub, his face ruddy and fresh, telling of a clean, good life, stronger than any spoken testimony could. Neither weakness nor strength were revealed here, clearly; for no yielding to the lower self had ever taken place, and John brushed away the result of his moral victories with his smiles; so that, instead of the strong, firmly set jaw of the man who has done and won, there was only a chin set with boyish dimples.

“If she marries him,” mused Richard, “she will know as much as he does, and they will learn the ways of life together. Her love will never mean more than being fond of him though. If she marries me I will be a constant mystery to her, for I have lived in a world where she has never been and never can go, but she will worship me for it.” All of which went to show that Richard knew a good

deal about one side of one kind of woman's nature, but had much to learn.

I wonder why it is that some men pride themselves in having been vile, and call it "worldly experience," or "wild oats"; and I wonder, too, why they think they can understand the highest in woman because they have discovered the worst spots in human nature, and have sold themselves for the rare discovery?

While Richard was doing all this thinking, Dr. Irving's eyes and mind were not idle, and, when both men were drawing deductions from their separate lines of reasoning, their eyes met. Richard looked uneasy, and a half-formed wish that Katherine had no father sprang up in his heart. And yet he liked the clergyman—most people did—but some keen foresight told him that trouble was ahead, and that the big hand and head and the deep eyes of the man across the table would be apt to have something to do with it.

"Do you ever hope to do any good in Chinatown, Doctor Irving?" asked Richard, more because he wanted to say something than for any other desire for information.

"Yes, I certainly do if I follow God's leading. Don't you?"

"Well, I know so little about God, you know, and they are such awful people down there."

"Oh, no worse than we are up-town. They love goodness and virtue as well as we do, but the smell of beer and whiskey and opium and dirt greet them day after day, and they accept it all as their own, and grow to be a part of it. They lack properly cooked food, and when their stomachs call for a stimulant it is no wonder that they obey the call."

"I know a man down there who says that since his daughter learned to cook he no longer gets the eleven o'clock thirst," said Katherine. "If cooking and cleanliness were taught and emphasized in the public schools, and model tenements replaced the present wretched holes, and, above all, the saloon was shut up, no line of virtue could be drawn at Chatham any more than at Madison Square."

"You are a prohibitionist then, Miss Irving?" questioned Richard, smiling.

"When you have stood by as many dying beds as I have; when you have prayed and struggled until your physical as well as your spiritual nature has been robbed of its strength to save some weak brother or sister; and then, when you have seen the light of heaven come into their faces, a light that had to flee because alcohol burned around them, you too will be one," said Katherine.

"But could not the power of God save them from it?" said Richard.

“The power of God compels no one to live right, nor does it ever work independent of men. God gives you a light to-day, my brother, and you are to follow it. He will be within you, encouraging, cheering, and warming your soul with His love and strength, but never forget that He has honored you with a will, a soul, and reasoning powers, and those must be exercised; otherwise, you are a mere automaton as incapable of virtue as of vice. You must will to let God do His will in you, for God’s power is life, not magic. Your will-power will not keep you, but it must make away for the Spirit of the Keeper. God’s strength is made perfect in weakness, but the weakness must be ready to admit it is there. Pride and stubbornness and ignorance are so strong in man that it takes him some time to discover that without God he can do nothing, so he needs teaching and sheltering while the lesson is being taught. I am glad that God cares so much for character that he would rather we would fall and struggle back to him, than to keep us pure in the sense that the clothing-house dummy is kept clean—namely, by having his lifeless face washed with soap and water, and new clothes put on his unresisting body every morning.”

“How do you know so—so—much of God?”

“From His Word, and from my own experience.”

"How do you know that there is a God?"

Dr. Irving looked strangely at him, and, before Katherine could reply, said:

"Do you find it necessary to ask that question to-day, Mr. Masterson?"

"Reason and faith should go together, should they not?" said Richard, a little confused.

"They certainly should not be opposed; answer him, Katherine."

"I know the Scriptures are of God," said Katherine, "because without any attempt at straining points the New Testament fills up the plot, if I may use the term, of the Old Testament. I know that a very great many of the prophecies have been fulfilled; and I know, too, that these prophecies were not a juggling of words or mere suggestions, but an accurate statement of facts. I know that Jesus Christ was the Son of God because never man spake like this man, and because there is no attempt at painting an ideal man, though everyone admits the evangelists have done so. I have as much legal proof of the life, death, and resurrection of my Saviour as I have that Washington was the Father of his country, but, better than that, His words have become life to me. When He said, 'Ye must be born again,' I sought the way, and I found it through belief in Him. My life was changed, and

it has become literally true that in my life 'old things have passed away, behold all things have become new.' The Spirit of God brings a life that is its own proof."

John and the minister were much interested, and Richard evidently was, too, for he thought for a few moments, and then said in a puzzled sort of a way:

"But why should we be saved through belief in Christ rather than through our good deeds?"

"Because that belief is the resurrecting of our dead consciences, the creating of a new life within us; and because no man or woman without Christ is truly good."

"What!" cried Richard, in eloquent surprise. "Why, Miss Irving, I know a man who is an atheist. He gives to the poor, he wrongs no man, he helps the down-trodden, he is good—better than most Christians;" this last with decision.

"Is his soul white, or is he self-indulgent? Does he smoke, drink, live well, or does he deny himself?" asked Katherine quietly.

"Do ministers do that always?"

"I did not say they do; the Bible, and not its expounders, should be our guide. I simply wanted to know how good your saint really was. He may be generous by nature, and give fifteen dollars of his weekly allowance of one hundred dollars to

charity, but in what way does it really touch his life? You know that when the sick woman in the crowd touched Jesus, He felt, as our King James's version quaintly puts it, 'virtue going out of Him.' He gave nothing that was not full of Himself. That is what we must do. If we give ourselves, our money will be a part of the gift, but we may give our money and retain ourselves. We may try to bribe God by giving a few dollars to someone while we are destroying our own and others' souls. You would not want to eat from a plate that was polished outside and filthy within, and no such crockery as that will be found on God's table."

"I knew a man," said the minister in his deep, strong voice, "who filled a high social, as well as a great political, position in this city. He was by nature a generous, but an exceedingly carnal man. No poor fellow ever failed to find sympathy at his office, no matter how busy he was. He gave his money and his love, and yet he did not follow Christ. He could talk about a 'first cause,' 'a mighty God,' 'salvation by one's own effort,' etc., and often assured me proudly that he would run his chances with the others when heaven was apportioned. He was a church member, and was very proud of his pastor, who called the Bible 'lovely Hebrew legends'; Christ, a great moral teacher, and no

more; and man (the pastor and his followers), the noblest work of God's hands. One day a man sought him for help. He had heard of his goodness, for the newspapers always noise such things abroad—especially if they are of a man's political persuasion—and so he was sure he would help him. He did, and out of his gratitude he wrote him a letter full of thanks and praise, and the good man turned it over to a newspaper and made political capital out of it. Later, he noticed that the man's daughter was rather nice-looking, and then the viper in the generous man became apparent. Poor girl, she was only one of many. When he helped a man to a position he always made sure that he would vote his ticket at the next election, and the ticket, I assure you, did not stand for righteousness. He gave away a fortune to charity, and many souls to utter darkness. He thought he could buy heaven (what the blood of Christ paid for) with his miserable pocketbook, while his soul was only fit for a pigsty."

"I was sitting in a restaurant a few nights ago," said Richard, "and a clergyman whom I happen to know entered with three gentlemen. They drank liquor for over an hour fast and furious. There was I, with an appetite for what they were drinking, and I looked at the man of religion and wondered if

there was any harm in it after all. A man and woman sat near me, and I saw that the woman was pleading for something. The man's face was stern and set, and I heard him say, 'No, Annie, I will have some whiskey. I have done without it three months now, and have suffered every day. I will break my pledge with the priest. If that holy man does it, I can.' What do you think of that?"

"I have a few thoughts on that," said the minister. "No pledge will save a man from such a habit. God must create in him a clean heart. Had that man been truly converted he would not have suffered, and" (this in a low voice), "the man who preaches the name of Jesus Christ, and gives himself over to licentious living, is a blot on the face of God's earth, and it were better that a millstone were hung around his neck and that he were cast into the sea. Let me tell you now how to live right—believe God. There are spiritual as well as physical laws that have to be obeyed to obtain good results. The blackest crimes and vilest sins have been committed by people whose conscience commended them. Conscience is principally the child of our training. That is why revelation is necessary, and we are told to 'believe.' Hundreds of sane people go wrong on just this point. They say it is the life only, and not the belief, that is necessary, forgetting

that works follow faith, as the digging of potatoes follows their planting."

"Yes," interrupted Katherine, "and every farmer who plants potatoes unconsciously preaches a sermon of faith. He believes in God's agents, and lets them develop the seed he plants."

The clergyman smiles, and adds: "The Jugger-naut existed because of this much vaunted 'honest belief'; the votaries of Venus degraded themselves for the same reason; the atheists of the Paris Commune made it their excuse for their bestial brutality, and in all religious and other rites, where sin of the vilest and most cruel kind held sway, the individual believed he was doing right. Go to your divine and holy Lord for pure faith and reason, and He will guide you. If you have gone to Him honestly, you have the witness in you, and when you believe God it is easy to believe His Word."

At this point a messenger boy arrived with a note for Dr. Irving.

"It is from your friend, Mrs. de Rutyer, John," said the minister, smiling. "Suppose you come with me."

John hesitated and looked ruefully at Katherine, who returned the look. But, thinking that Katherine might be able to help Richard spiritually, he generously said:

"I will be delighted. Perhaps these two can reason out things better alone. Be steadfast, Mr. Masterson, and have faith in God."

"Hold fast to that which is good," said the minister, as he shook Richard's hand, at the same time looking into his eyes as if he would read there what his intuition told him had not been revealed in the conversation—that Richard's soul was still in pawn.

CHAPTER XII.

CUPID AS A THEOLOGICAL PROFESSOR

"I THINK, my brother," said Katherine, when she and Richard had gone to the little parlor of the parsonage, "that you are far from being rooted and grounded in the faith."

"You see," mumbled Richard a little uneasily, "I am a Roman Catholic."

"Do you not know how St. Paul rebuked the men who said they were of Paul and of Apollo rather than of Christ?" she answered with a slight gesture of impatience. "It matters not what church you go to, but it matters a great deal what you are. I am not trying to make a Protestant of you. I care not what creed you subscribe your name to, as long as Christ is the founder of it, and the One in which it lives and moves and has its being."

"That is very broad; you are indeed liberal," said Richard, looking at her in amazement.

"The Gospel is liberal; therefore, I am," said Katherine. "Faith in Christ and forgiveness through His atoning blood is the sum and sub-

stance of it. Roman Catholics, Baptists, Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians, and all the other members of the evangelical faith believe the same thing. They only differ in the non-essentials. The only thing that I demand is that the non-essentials be according to the Word of God. It is only in the matter of church government that many of the sects differ after all."

"I know little about it, Miss Irving," said Richard, in a low, earnest tone, "but I do know this—that I never was more earnest in my desire to be a true man."

Katherine reached out her hand to him, and, as he held it for a moment within his own, she said, "And I will help you."

For a moment both were silent. Many thoughts flashed through Richard's mind as he sat there. Something told him to tell her all, to throw himself on a mercy that he knew would be boundless, and to be honest at last. But when a man has been weak and yielding for years, it is rare indeed that moral courage is born in an instant. So Richard sighed and drooped his head, and with that sign of defeat his high resolves faded away.

"Be brave," said Katherine, breaking the silence. "Be true to Christ, and He will never fail you."

A sob that had left his heart broke from Richard's

lips. He thought what he might have been had he followed this Christ she was talking about. Sin and unbelief and wrong had blackened his life. Meshes of deceit had hedged up the walls around him, and he felt that now he was bound by the life he had led and the deeds he had done. Lower and lower drooped his head, until, unable to bear the visions any longer, he dropped on his knees and laid his head on the chair he had been sitting, sobbing with the weariness of it all.

It seemed the most natural thing in the world for Katherine to place her hand on his shoulder and say, "Poor, poor boy," for, was he not seeking her Christ—the Christ she would die for. When he looked up at her with the tears dimming his big, gray eyes, he caught the look of tender sympathy shining in her own, and for a moment he was tempted to put his arms around her neck as a tired child might have done. But, looking again, he caught a light in her eyes that made him hesitate, and when he heard her breathe the words, "My Lord," he cried out, "Oh, that I, too, were worthy of Him!"

"His worth makes up for your lack of it," said Katherine. No other word was said, but in that moment, when the tears of penitence softened the eyes of one, and the love of God and the brotherhood of man filled the heart of the other, a love was born

in both hearts that, though different in kind, was destined to live forever.

"I must send you away now," said Katherine, again breaking the intense silence. "I am going away to-morrow morning for two weeks, and I have much to do to-night. I would like to let you remain longer, but you are only one of a great number, you know."

"Going away," said Richard, with a blank look, and wincing slightly at the last part of her remark. "Yes, but I am not going out of the State. One of the girls in whom I am interested is boarding in a little country village on the Hudson. She is weak in character yet, and so I must go to be a strength to her, for I want her to be well fortified against the wiles of the enemy when she returns to New York."

"You are an angel," said Richard, looking at her.

"No, I am not," said Katherine. "Only very young girls' heads are turned by such remarks, and if you want to please me you will never pay me any compliment of that kind. When we get to know God we get acquainted with ourselves for the first time; and I know how far from being angelic I am."

"I can picture you as one, though," said Richard, looking at her. "You would make a beautiful angel."

"No more than a lily would make a lovely song-

ster," answered Katherine, simply, and without realizing what a compliment she was paying herself now. "In our places as ourselves we are always lovely. Even the angels cannot be greater than we can be if we are true, for the Word says that when we see Christ we shall be like him. But," smiling at him and yet drawing herself up in a dignified way that sat well upon her, "I am not pleased when you say such things. I might look my displeasure instead of speaking it, but I know you do not see things in the light that I do, so I will be very frank with you when you offend. Do not talk to me in that way again."

"I beg your pardon," said Richard. "I—I—did not mean to——"

"Yes, I know," said Katherine, in a pleased voice. "I think I understand your informal way; let us say no more about it."

She went to the library to get him some helpful books, and returned with some little volumes on science and the Bible, several on Christian evidence, and a volume which she had marked in a great many places. "This one is by father," she said, pointing to the latter. "It contains some of his noblest and most inspired thoughts, and will surely be a help to you. My father is first a man of faith, but he reasons what can be reasoned rather than states the

fact and takes it for granted. I do, too. We can learn much about the unseen in the seen world—much of what God has revealed in what man has discovered. Science to me is a holy field, and is sure to become one of the strongest secular agencies of righteousness the world has ever had. Now, I must send you away. I thank God for letting me know you.”

“You—you do care for my welfare, then?” questioned Richard, eagerly.

“I do very much,” said Katherine, warmly. “Some day when you, too, have suffered with your Lord and then rejoiced, you will understand what bringing a soul to Him means.”

Richard bowed his head for a moment, and then looked up at her. Presently she said in a voice that touched his very soul, “Promise me that you will never go back. He died that you might live—promise me!”

“I promise,” faltered Richard, and so they parted.

At the door he was met by John, the minister, and a dignified-looking woman in black, whose pale face and erect head said “aristocrat” as plainly as if Mrs. de Rutyer had been an English duchess instead of a descendant of a good Dutch woman who wore wooden shoes, and whose husband smoked, and amassed a fortune. Behind these three walked a

tall, stout man with a florid face and brown whiskers. The latter was the proprietor of a large wholesale dry-goods house, whose charities were widely known and whose name was a synonym for Christian generosity all over the city. He shook hands with Richard in a fatherly way, but the saloon-keeper looked a little shamefaced at meeting such a lot of goodness together, and, after a few words, he walked off hastily. John ran after him, and, in his characteristic fashion, struck him on the shoulder and said, "Good-by, old fellow. Come to the mission often, and run down to Chinatown whenever you can and sing for us. The Doctor is very much worried about something, or he would have stopped to speak to you; in fact" (speaking in an aggrieved tone of voice), "we all are."

"Nothing serious, I hope," said Richard, thinking of Katherine.

"Serious enough," replied John, looking gloomily at the pavement. "Miss Irving will feel very badly."

"Does it affect her?" asked Richard, trying to look calm.

"Whenever a fellow-creature is wronged, and the cause of Christ dishonored, it affects Miss Irving," said John, earnestly; and then, "Good-by, old chap. Keep up your spirits, and remember that

I want to be your friend whether you will have me or not."

Richard shook his head, and muttered as he walked away, "Confound that fellow! I do like him."

CHAPTER XIII

THE TRAIL OF THE SERPENT

WHEN Katherine saw John and Mrs. de Rutyer enter together, something like a faint smile ran over her features, but when the aristocratic, soft hand was held out to her, and the stately head was raised, while the cultured tongue said, with the hiss that had the music of a fashionable boarding-school in it, "How are you, Katherine, dear? Are you letting the high and holy have their way in your life?" she bravely succeeded, by biting her lip, in looking stately and good.

People said that anyone who told Mrs. de Rutyer they wanted to get rid of self and die to the carnal life could have a substantial share in her pocket-book, and anyone who looked sad and disappointed when she questioned them—as she always did, whether in season or out of season—about the state of their soul was made a large sharer in her interests. Not that she had not common-sense, but that she had an uncommon religion. She believed in working while the sun shone, and no matter how

unsuitable the occasion, or how short the time, she got on her spiritual pedestal and inquired if the one at the base was real good or a hypocrite. But Katherine loved her because she loved everyone who was sincere. Love, she always said, covered a multitude of sins, and she knew it was Mrs. de Ruttyer's love for God and her fellow-creatures that made her make so many mistakes, and transformed a brilliant society woman into a foolish church woman, who misinterpreted the Bible and often did harm where she sought to do good. However, it is better to limp along the right road than to ride in a gilded chariot along the wrong one.

"You have met Mr. Grey, Katherine, have you not?" asked her father, while Mr. Grey bowed profusely.

"I think not," said Katherine, smiling. "But who has not heard of Alfred Grey, the Christian merchant?"

This was the synonym applied to Mr. Grey, and to say that he liked it would scarcely describe the feeling that surged within his breast every time he heard it.

"I have seen you at the mission, Miss Irving," he said, "and have been thanking God for your beautiful life, even though I never had an opportunity to speak to you. Mrs. Grey has met you, has she not?"

"Yes, I know your wife and daughters," answered Katherine, and then her father asked her to sit down, and, as John drew five chairs together, she noticed the troubled look on her father's face.

"Something is wrong, Papa darling?" she asked, anxiously looking at him.

"Yes, dear," he said, and his voice shook with emotion. "You may as well postpone your trip. 'Alice is lost to us.'"

"What?" cried Katherine.

For answer he handed her a letter, but the first few lines made her sick at heart, and she gave it to Mrs. de Rutyer, saying faintly, "Read it."

The finely modulated voice of Mrs. de Rutyer shook, and Katherine knew that there was a little lump in her throat that she bravely tried to conceal. The letter was addressed to Mrs. de Rutyer, and ran as follows:

DEAR MADAME: I do not feel able to write to dear Miss Irving, so I ask you to tell her not to try to find me, for I leave here to-night. I have tried and tried, but it is all too hard, and I have given up the struggle. I was serving Christ (and, oh, how I loved Him!) when a Christian man engaged in work with you and Dr. Irving led me astray again. I am not the only one either. It was he who led Nellie Pierson away after she had been good for two years. Nellie killed herself, but I will not. I

will compel him to give me a weekly allowance, and live now for pleasure, but heaven help him if he comes near me. I have promised not to expose him, but, oh, how I despise the rascal!

"I know you will say that the devil has got me, and I suppose he has; but he has more respectable people than I am, so it is nothing to be surprised at that I, a girl of the streets, have gone back.

"You and Miss Irving are good, and I believe in you, but I have no faith in men. Virtue is nothing to them. They join the church and are good for a while, but they know that forgiveness for them is easily obtained. I would advise you both to go into some other work. You cannot help a girl who has ever been as bad as I have. It is too hard to be good, and to climb, climb, climb all the time, and never to get rid of the fact that you were once fallen. If you forget it some one will recall the testimony you were told to give. If it is the Word of God that converts, and not man-made speeches, why are we advised to publicly disgrace ourselves by telling every tramp we meet that we were fallen? Oh, how I hate that word! A woman who wants to be good can never be half-way so, as men can; it is not her nature. It must be purity or impurity with her. It has been left to men to be vile and yet respectable.

"You have been kind to me. Though you said harsh things to me about my old life, I know that it was because you cared for me and wanted to rouse all my pride for the future. I will ask you to do

two things. If you try to help a girl, try to believe in her. You never had faith in me and I felt it; but Miss Irving did, and, when God left me, that trust kept me for weeks without rushing back. And don't ask people to tell about their past life; if a sense of sin is roused in them, they will never want to speak of the shameful past and of what erected Calvary's cross. Ah, it is only those that do not know what sin is who ask why the atonement was needed. Good-by.

"ALICE MASLAND."

The tears were running down Katherine's face when her father looked at her. John felt and looked savage. The clergyman's mouth was tightly shut, Mr. Grey was sobbing audibly, and the only one who was calm and unruffled was Mrs. de Ruyter.

"Who is guilty?" she asked in a clear voice that had a tragic note in it. "Of what use is our labor if there is a fiend in our midst? Katherine, we must pray and ask God to guide us to find this wretch."

"We must find Alice first," said Katherine, firmly. "She will tell me for the sake of the cause of Christ who the guilty one is."

"But, Miss Irving, she has left where she was," said Mr. Grey.

"I know that, but I will find her. Alice must not be lost. Oh, Lord Jesus, help me to bring back

this soul to Thee!" she cried, in an agonized voice that was full of pain and pleading.

"I wish I had known the poor girl," said Mr. Grey, his voice trembling.

"Why, you did know her, brother," said Mrs. de Rutyer. "Do you not remember the day I met you in the lunch-room on Sixth Avenue with her, and you told me how strong in character she was becoming?"

What caused the red in Mr. Grey's face puzzled Katherine much, nor did it escape her father.

"Oh, I think I do remember," said Mr. Grey, running his hand over his forehead. "I know so many of the dear redeemed girls that it is difficult for me to remember them all. Let me see, she was blonde, was she not?"

"No, she had dark hair and blue eyes," said Katherine, looking at him with a curious light in her eyes that was not lost on Mr. Grey. She did not mean it to be lost on him, and so, without withdrawing the eyes that he felt now were burning his soul, she said: "I will have no trouble in finding Alice."

"Will you go to-day?" he questioned, with trembling lips that nearly refused to ask the question.

"I am tired to-day," said Katherine, who did not

want to tell a lie, and gave this evasive answer. "At what hour does the first train start to-morrow morning?"

"At—why, how should I know, sister," said the Christian merchant, the white in his face now driven away by the guilty red.

"Let us have a prayer over the matter," said the guileless Mrs. de Rutyer, and no one was gladder than Brother Grey to bury his face in the chair he knelt beside.

Katherine did not believe the Christian merchant would pray. She herself felt that her own lips could just then offer neither supplication nor thanksgiving, so she looked to her father to begin. "Brother Grey" forestalled him, however, and, in passionate accents that touched poor Mrs. de Rutyer's heart very much, prayed for the return of the prodigal. Tears choked his utterance at times, and they were real tears, too; for, like a great many others, the Christian merchant was much more of a fool than a villain, and though his sentiment, like his virtue, was only short-lived, it was genuine while it lasted. Of course, he prayed a little more fervently than his heart suggested, because his friends had to be convinced of his goodness; for, he argued, it would never do to have the cause of Christ dishonored by his unmasking. This Christian merchant was very

zealous for the honor of Christ when he himself was in a corner; but when he was in an open field he concluded that after all he was not a St. Peter, and so could not be intrusted with the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Of course, he sighed because he was not. At least he could do that; indeed, most people thought he did it very well, and he himself was inclined to agree with them.

How Katherine shook his hand when he and John took their leave she did not know, but she thought it was because she was learning to be as wise as a serpent. When he left the house she felt that the first thing to be done was to get the windows open, but there was Mrs. de Rutyer, who would probably wonder about the need of so much airiness.

"Well, Katherine, deah, I must go now," said the little aristocrat in her peculiar hissing voice, "and I want you to pray for me. Perhaps I am wrong, and have not followed the dear Lord closely enough. I may have a good deal of the flesh still. May God forgive me if I have hindered Alice in any way."

This from the pride of the de Rutyers was no little confession, and Katherine put her arms around her.

"Oh, dear Mrs. de Rutyer," she said, "you are *true*, and your failings are always weighing down the right side of the scale. You—you are a little

strange sometimes, and you are so ready to believe those who talk smoothly, and to doubt the honesty that is not clothed in fine words."

"I am so glad you talk frankly to me, Katherine," she said, trying to conceal the tremor in the well-trained lips, "but you know the Lord promises us the spirit of wisdom, and—and I thought I had it."

"Sometimes, dear, a self-made religion, as well as worldly feelings, will still the voice of the Lord. I think that if we just breathe His love day by day and go with a heart full of faith to every human being, making them feel that we trust them, and then if we read the Word in the light of the Holy Spirit and keep looking unto Jesus hour by hour for guidance, and not allow ourselves to be blinded by good or bad appearances, He will give us the spirit of wisdom."

"Mr. Pierce says that he believes the world to be a looking-glass," said Mrs. de Rutyer, "and that if we look into it with a bright, trusting face we see the same reflection."

"That is only partially true," said Katherine, thoughtfully. "It is true that love begets love, true that mind influences mind so much that trust, and, in some cases I believe, health can be produced by the great noble trusting influence of one friend over another. If I am nervous and sick and gloomy, and

you come to me full of faith and health and brightness pointing me forward to bluer skies and clearer days, if your laugh drowns my groan and your Christian optimism overshadows my cynical pessimism, I am cured. Or, if I have no faith in myself, and those around me generously agree that I ought not to have, and you come trusting me and believing great things about me and are firmly convinced that you will yet see me planted on the mountaintops of triumph, I am very apt to get there."

"This is science more than religion, though, Katherine."

"Dearie," said Katherine, speaking as if Mrs. de Rutyer was a child, "God's Word is all science. Love is of God, and it is only the heart that has drunk of love at the great fountain-head that can trust a weak, falling fellow-creature. It is a scientific fact that those who live by the sword will die by the sword, for every evil thought or action returns to torture the owner's soul, and the sword-thrust comes back."

"Then, where is the falsehood in Mr. Pierce's theory?" asked Mrs. de Rutyer, humbly.

"Here," said Katherine, quietly. "Christ wept over Jerusalem, but it put him to death. Men and women in every country have come to the multitude, weeping their hearts away for love of them,

and they have stoned and hanged and burned them ; but," in a low voice, " they have come back to worship at their graves, so that love finally triumphed after all. It is the fulfilling of the law, and, dear Mrs. de Rutyer, you and I will live this great gospel of love. We will both commence anew to-day, and if we tread on rough ground we will know that that very path was glorified by Him."

" Perhaps He has been giving me the spirit of wisdom through you," said Mrs. de Rutyer, simply, and they parted.

CHAPTER XIV.

A HYPOCRITE IN A TRAP

RICHARD MASTERSON was sitting in the parlor of his little home holding his boy on his lap, and gloomily watching the movements of his wife as she went around attending to her household duties, when a knock at the door announced a messenger boy, who brought the following note from Katherine:

"MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: Will you go down to Chinatown and sing for the girls to-night? You might give them a little talk, too, if you will, though I warn you to be very careful what you say, because the members of the Finnegan Association are all born critics. Helping others will surely help you, and with the love of your Redeemer in your heart I know you want to work for Him.

"May God bless you, and may you grow in the knowledge and grace of His dear Son.

"Sincerely yours, in His blessed fellowship,

"KATHERINE IRVING."

"I will go," Richard's note said, and as a post-script he added: "Come back soon, it will be so

lonely without you. I have no one else to talk to me about God." And all the while his wife was hovering near, never thinking that another woman was the cause of the soft light in Richard's eyes or the gentleness in his voice.

"Pop, old Mary is dead," said Stevie, proud to be able to impart such a piece of information.

"And who is old Mary?" queried Richard.

"The apple-woman down the street w'at sells newspapers when the business is bad, me dear," said Stevie, imitating the old lady's voice to perfection.

Richard laughed, and requested more information.

"I have four childher, me dear; leastways, they're me sister's childher w'ats dead these two years," continued Stevie, "and times is hard. Oh, this bad cough," and the little mimic gave a short, dry cough that fairly imitated the poor consumptive's.

"And where are your childher?" asked Richard.

"Don't know, Pop," said Stevie, gravely. "Old Mary is dead, you know. Pop, where would I be if you were dead?"

If this question did not wake Richard's reasoning powers, it woke his heart, and he got up to put his hat on.

"Show me old Mary's place, Steve," he said.

"Oh, I can't, Pop. They used to live down the

street, but when old Mary's cough got worse she went to the hospital, and the childher went downtown somewhere with some old woman till Aunt Mary got better. I liked Petie Finnegan; we were great chums. I met him at school, you know."

"Did Petie have a sister Kate?" asked Richard, remembering Katherine's many talks to him about the founder of the Finnegan Association.

"Yes, he did, Pop. She told me one day that she was going to be a primmy donny when she growed up."

"Heaven forbid," said Richard almost reverently, and then, after thinking for some moments, he sat down to await the club hour in Chinatown and to mentally plan his next meeting with Katherine.

While he was doing this, Katherine, heavily veiled, was playing sleuth at the Grand Central Station, and carefully watching the Christian merchant who pretended to be busily engaged in reading a newspaper. She had been waiting for several hours, her intuition telling her that the merchant would appear during the day, in order to warn Alice that she was about to search for her. It was only through the letter, which was postmarked Poughkeepsie, that Katherine had a clew, and it was that that told her to go to the station. She was secretly rejoicing at her success, though her heart

was heavy, and a great wave of indignation at the thought of how her father had trusted this man swept over her and threatened for a moment to choke her. She noticed that the Christian merchant's train was ready, so she decided that hers was too, and, drawing her heavy mourning veil closer, she followed him. After a two hours' ride from New York, and, as the suspense was becoming almost unbearable, the Christian merchant suddenly arose to his feet and left the train. Katherine followed him, and found that the station was New Hamburg, a pretty little hamlet on the banks of the Hudson. There was only one conveyance at the station, a rickety-looking buggy, and Mr. Grey took that, so Katherine, nonplussed and undecided, stood on the little platform and looked blankly at the old stage-driver who drove up, calling out, "Stage for Woppingers Falls."

A tall, healthy, happy-looking woman stood near by and caressed her bicycle with her right hand, while she watched the passengers depart for Woppingers Falls. This was one of the great events at New Hamburg, and the woman was mentally asking herself how much Mrs. Matthews spent in New York, and where Mrs. Lawson got the fare to go there, when Katherine touched her on the shoulder and said pleadingly, "Will you lend me your wheel?"

"Well, I never!" ejaculated the woman.

"I know you did not," assented Katherine, "but you must not refuse me. A soul is weighing in the balance. I will leave you my watch as security until I return."

"You are a Christian?" queried the woman.

Katherine nodded.

"Then I will trust you. I am Mrs. Roberts, and my husband is one of the elders in the little church you see over there," pointing over her shoulder. "So when you return just ask for me; anybody in town will be able to direct you."

"You have done it for Him," said Katherine, and, after deftly pinning up the bottom of her skirt, she mounted the wheel, steered around the village pump and followed the buggy, which was just crossing the drawbridge. The chase was becoming extremely exciting, but Katherine knew she had to be cautious, so she let the Christian merchant keep nearly a quarter of a mile ahead of her. Near the iron foundry which shades the waters of the little creek she met eight or nine grimy workmen returning from their day of toil, and she noticed that they looked at her suspiciously. A woman in deep mourning, whose face was shrouded in a sombre veil and who was mounted on a bicycle that they all recognized to be Mrs. Roberts', was certainly a

vision to call forth suspicion. Mr. Roberts, who was about to ride home on his wheel, was among the men, and he approached Katherine and said, "Where did you get that bicycle, ma'am?"

The whole scene that was to follow flashed before Katherine's mind in an instant of time—the explanation and the delay, during which she would surely lose sight of those whom she was following, and so, without answering, she threw all her energy into her pedals and handle-bars, and fairly flew up the road. This, of course, convinced Mr. Roberts that his wife's wheel was stolen by a thief, so he mounted his own and followed her. Katherine, looking over her shoulder, saw this, and her heart sank within her. "Lord help me," she cried, earnestly, and faster and faster she flew. At the turn of the road she saw that the buggy was only a little ahead of her. What if she were seen and recognized? What if Mr. Roberts should ask the aid of the occupants to catch the thief!

"Something must be done," she cried, despairingly.

Her pursuer had not yet reached the turn, and, as she looked around for some way of escape, her eye fell upon a large bottle lying on the road-side. Quick as a flash came the thought that caused her to spring from her wheel, and an instant later she

had crushed the bottle into small bits with a stone, and had industriously spread the pieces all over the road. Then she mounted her wheel, and was off again. A moment later she heard a curious sound followed by several ejaculations, and she knew that Mr. Roberts' bicycle tires were punctured to perfection, and that the glass bottle had done its work well.

"How John would enjoy that scene," said Katherine to herself, and then, as she looked back and saw the disconsolate man looking helplessly at her flying figure, repentance seized her, and she was almost sorry that she had not surrendered.

"But I will pay for the tires, and he will enjoy the joke to-morrow," she said, laughingly, and then her mirth suddenly subsided, for Mr. Grey had stopped before a little wayside cottage, and was paying the driver.

Katherine rode on a little farther, and, when she saw the Christian merchant enter the house after the buggy had driven off, she dismounted and walked back cautiously. Creeping up to the door she heard Alice in a thick voice tell the woman who attended to her housekeeping duties to go to bed, and when the housekeeper obeyed and she had closed the door of her room, the girl for whom the Christian merchant had been praying that morning said to him:

"Well, hypocrite, have you come up to pray with me?"

"Alice, why do you treat me in this way?" asked Mr. Grey, in an aggrieved tone of voice. "Such sarcasm is entirely uncalled for."

"Yes, I agree with you. I ought to use a horse-whip instead," said Alice, laughing loudly at her own joke.

"Why did you write to Mrs. de Rutyer, Alice?" he questioned, crossly. "I was nearly discovered, and my remorse was terrible. Oh, dear girl, I beg of you to put away that whiskey and that horrid cigarette and listen to me. I am truly penitent, and will do all I can to undo what I have done."

Alice took a little book out of her pocket and marked a cross on it, saying, at the same time, "This is exactly the forty-eighth time you have told me that, and I know for a certainty that you have been saying it off and on for seven years, especially after revival services."

Mr. Grey bowed his head, and then said: "You know, Alice, that the Bible says there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

"And you pretend that you are in Christ Jesus?" cried Alice, laughing uproariously. "You pious old wretch, you know as well as I do that as works without faith is dead so also is faith without works,

and that it is not the ones who merely say, 'Lord, Lord,' but those who, with that, do the will of God, who are saved. Look here, Grey, you will never see the face of God any more than I will. I do not believe you were ever converted in heart. If you were, you could not sin and not suffer. I am suffering the tortures of the damned for my falling away."

"You frighten me, Alice."

"Have a little whiskey to strengthen you, then."

"I think I will," he said; "though on general principles, of course, I condemn it. I am suffering with an awful toothache, so if you do not mind I will smoke this cigar, which I borrowed from the man who brought me here."

Alice roared with laughter. It was so amusing to her to have him keep up appearances of piety with her. He had been borrowing cigars and drinking whiskey against his principles so long that she always looked for the usual explanations.

Katherine knelt outside the door, and, as the faint rays of the early evening fell upon her hair, tingeing it with a soft light, she looked like some glorified being who was pleading with God for lost souls. The tears filled her eyes, and her voice was scarcely audible to herself when she said: "Oh, my precious Redeemer, how can he pain you so? How can he

sit in there, knowing that you are looking at him and knowing you as he must. Dear Jesus, do let *me* try to make up for it to you," and Katherine lifted up her hands as if to caress the feet of the Master, even as the "woman who loved much" had done at the house of Simon the Pharisee. "Let me save Alice, your poor little lamb who has lost her way in the thicket, and tell me what to do with *him*. He has deceived my dear, good father, and has polluted the very air of the church and mission with his presence, but You must deal with him, for, wicked as he is, I would not dare to. It is You who are the aggrieved one—You, who died that he might live."

Great courage and great gentleness seemed to come to Katherine just then, and she arose and entered the house.

The Christian Merchant dropped his glass to the floor, and Alice screamed hysterically: "Miss Irving! Miss Irving! Miss Irving!"

"How could you be so wicked, Mr. Grey?" said Katherine, as calmly as if she were speaking to a baby. "How could you use the cross that He carried to shelter you in your iniquity?"

"My God, my sins have found me out!" cried the frightened man. "Miss Irving, what are you going to do about it?"

"I do not know yet," said Katherine, looking fixedly at him. "God will decide for me. Of course, you must leave our work at once, and must stop preaching the Gospel everywhere."

"You would not tell my wife—you would not expose me!" he gasped. "You know how the public would jeer, and how the cause of Christ would be dishonored."

"I suppose some people would look at it in that way, but I do not," said Katherine, resolutely. "The kingdom of heaven is not meat nor drink, and people are not led to the Son of God by being made sure that no one who has put his hand to the plough has turned back. God's house must be a clean one. The ones who would laugh will be those who, perhaps, would not care to do anything else; but the ones whom you are harming now, and whom I would hurt by helping you to cover your sin, are the children of God who are trying to follow Him."

A murderous light shone in the Christian Merchant's eyes, and he cried wildly, "You would not dare to expose me!"

"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age," quoted Katherine, firmly. "God is my refuge, and you need have no doubts but that I will do my full duty to Him. Alice" (turning to the girl), "get up and dress yourself. You must leave here at once."

"She will do no such thing," cried Mr. Grey, now assuming a threatening attitude, and looking furtively at the door as if to see what his next move would be. Katherine saw it, but no touch of fear came near her.

"Hold my hand, Lord," she whispered, with the simplicity of a child, and just then a knock was heard, and, in response to Katherine's "Come in," Mr. Roberts and another stalwart workman entered.

Katherine went up to them, and, taking Mr. Roberts's hand, said, "I am so glad you came. Are you a Christian?"

"I hope so," was the answer in a surprised voice, for the robbery of a bicycle and the appearance of the evident carousal before him scarcely justified such a question. "My name is Charles Roberts."

"Oh, then it is your wife's bicycle I rode here on. I will explain its presence later, but now I want you and your friend to help me to get this poor girl back to the village. My name is Katherine Irving," and she handed him her card, on which was the name of the New York mission in which she and her father labored.

"Of course, we will," was the hearty reply. "Why, I know your father well."

"I will explain my visit, and," a little playfully,

"the story of the accident to your bicycle, as we return to the village."

Mr. Roberts smiled and tried to look pleasant, and then he told his workman to ride back to the village, and, after telling Mrs. Roberts to prepare a room and welcome for two guests, to return with a conveyance.

"You may go now," said Katherine to Mr. Grey, and he looked at her firm mouth and clear eyes and, without a word, departed. Alice grew hysterical, and it was several hours before Katherine could get her quiet enough to enter the buggy which the workingman had brought for her conveyance to the village. During the long hours of the night the young missionary watched over the troubled girl, who moaned and cried for mercy, and when in seeming response to her prayers the moaning ceased, and a calm, sweet sleep ensued, it seemed to Katherine as if the very angels of God had filled the room.

CHAPTER XV.

COMEDY AND TRAGEDY IN CHINATOWN.

CHINATOWN was changed. A change, strange and unexplainable, had come over the even tenor of its way. There was not as much noise as formerly, and the Apache-like playfulness that had formerly characterized the frisking frolics of the neighborhood had ceased, and in its place was a subdued murmur that boded strange things. Katie Finnegan was converted; there was no doubt about it. She went to the club and about her usual duties, but there was a something gleaming in her eye that hid the squint almost entirely, and actually made the freckled face look attractive.

"My stars!" said Aggie Murphy, who always went into raptures when anything unusual happened. That was all she could ejaculate whenever she met Katie, but it meant a great deal.

At the meeting we are privileged to peep into there was a great throng. Richard sat beside the president, who held a potato-masher, which did duty as a gavel, and the members sat around gaping.

"We'll open dis caboose—I mean dis meetin' wid prayer," said Katie, and (seeing some of the girls giggle) "anywan what doesn't want to pray will get dere noses mashed."

"Oh, Katie," remonstrated Richard, in a low voice.

"I beg yer parding, sir, but I wants me members to pray—o' course, dey don't needs to if dey don't wants to, but——"

"Dat's just where de fun comes in," said Lizzie Kelly, the rebel of former occasions. "Yer just as pigoted as de rest o' dem what gets de notion dat dey're little Saint Pauls."

"Ah, give yer tongue a holiday," commented Sadie Cohen, the "ex-vice," who remembered that she lost her office partly through Lizzie, "Dere's no such word as 'pigoted,' anyhow."

"Well, if dere ain't, dere ought to be to describe you," retorted Lizzie.

"Girls, girls," said Richard, reprovingly.

"Behave rightly, girls," supplemented the president, knocking on the table with the potato-masher. "Yez talk like a lot o' feathered Zulus. Bow yer heads; I'll keep me temper, and the rest o' ye keep yer mouths shut while Mr. Masterson prays."

"I would rather you would pray, Katie," returned Richard. "It would have more of an effect on the girls."

Comedy and Tragedy in Chinatown 129

"All right," said Katie, and, clearing her throat, she began: "Dear Lord, I wish you'd save the bad gang w'at comes in here to be fresh. We kin all be a blessing to each odder, but some wants to boss de roost, an' some wouldn't be happy if dey wasn't fightin' wid somebody."

"Listen to who's talkin'," interrupted one member, and another followed with the remark that "Kit Finnegan was off her base," while sundry remarks about the pious president, far from a complimentary character, proceeded from every corner.

"Dey're at it again. Saints in glory, intercede for dem before dey're mouths hangs dem by the neck," added Katie.

"Katie, you are praying to the Lord and need no mediator," said Richard, as gravely as Katherine would have said it. "Do not say anything to the saints."

"Well, dear Lord, dey's a bad lot. [Katie meant the members, not the saints.] I'm not much better, but I'm honestly doin' my best to be; keep de gang orderly to-night, an' make de Finnegan Association a club w'at decent people kin attend. Amen. Now, loidies, to business; let's elect new officers."

"I nominate Carrie Schmeerkase for vice-president," said a member.

"Not on yer life," said Katie, "not unless Carrie mends her ways."

"Ah, mend yer stockings," said Carrie, jumping up, "we can nominate a hoodoo, if we want to; dis ain't no religious jimdoodle."

"It's goin' to be, dough," said Katie.

"Well, den, pay for de herring ye swiped last week from de Dutchman an' de apples from de Dago, an' fix up de loidy whose heel ye cut wid a stone."

"If ye said dat a week ago I'd ha' broke yer complexion," said the president, "but to-night I won't. I'm goin' to pay for everyt'ing I owe. I'm sorry for de heel, but I can't help it now. Carrie, ye know yer a bad hairpin yerself, but I won't oxpose ye—maybe ye'll repent."

"G'wan, tell on me—tell about de day I——"

"Don't finish, Carrie; I won't tell," said the president. "'Tain't honest to peach; I'm honest."

"Say! some turrible t'ing has changed Katie Finnegan," said 'Aggie Murphy, her eyes as large as bullets with astonishment. "I move dat we all get changed de same way."

"Moved, seconded, carried, yes," answered the president. "Goils, all o' you who want to be changed hol' up yer paws."

Twenty hands went up immediately, and Katie, in a solemn voice, said:

Comedy and Tragedy in Chinatown 131

"Goils, say dis after me: 'Lord, who changed mean, bad, lyin' Katie Finnegan, change me, for I'm de same. I'm bad to me mudder, I am; I steal from her; I spen' Sunday gaddin' about like a goat wid four legs, two horns, an' no soul. I'm goin' along gettin' worse every day. Please change me an' make me good. Amen!'"

It was hard medicine, but the girls took it, and, when Richard got up to teach them to sing "There is sunshine in my soul to-day," they all did their best.

"Mr. Masterson," said Katie, after they had sung, "I'd like to be jes' a figure in dis club, an' get some saint to be de real president."

"No infallible dame for me," said Ida Finkelstein, who read the newspapers. "Ye'd be sayin' den ye were inspired, an' ud be kickin' us out some night wid yer holy toe. Have sense, Katie!"

"Yes, Katie. I think we had better have a flesh-and-blood president," said Richard, trying to look grave.

"P'raps yer right, sir, so I'll nominate me old enemy in de flesh, Lizzie Kelly, for vice. "The flesh" was the only Biblical term Katie could remember, and she used it at the first opportunity.

"I second dat," said a member.

"An' I accept," said Lizzie. "Yer honest now, Katie, and I'll stan' by ye."

Lizzie was elected, and there was a great deal of talk about minor matters and a good deal of argument about Katie Finnegan and her future; for the members looked upon their president as being some wonderful being who was already beyond their ken.

Lizzie Dominico was elected to the position of secretary, and, after a good deal of voting that was certainly not parliamentary, a bright little colored girl named Mamie Scollard was nominated for the office of treasurer.

"All coons look alike to me," cried a member in the back of the room.

"Not to me, dere's a difference in de wool," said another, who had the reputation of being something of a wit.

"She's got de mark o' Cain on her mug, an' she'd swipe a nickel off a dead man's eye, let alone bein' careful o' de funds," said the former treasurer, Mattie Foy.

This caused loud guffaws, cat-calls and cheers, and Richard looked a little anxiously around the room, and wished that Katherine was there to maintain order. But he had nothing to fear, as he learned a moment later, when the president knocked on the table with the potato-masher and said in a loud voice, "Dis is de Finnegan 'Association; I'm Katie Finnegan."

Comedy and Tragedy in Chinatown 133

"Oh, y'are, an' who's we?" asked an unruly member.

"Ten numbers less dan nawt'in," said the president. "Any loidies dat would stand up, an' down anuder because it pleased de Lord to give her a mournin' color ain't nobody."

"Well, we don't want no colored treasurer."

"She ain't colored," said the president. "Nobody's been dyin' her."

"Oh, dat's all right, but she's black."

"'Tain't because she don't wash herself, an' dats more'n udders can say," retorted the president, and then, turning to the club, she harangued it thus:

"I like Mamie Scollard. Why? 'Cause. Vote her down if yez have a good reason, but her color is as good in de wash as anyone's here, an' I'll bet w'en de Lord stoops down to listen to our prayers at night, He listens a bit closer to Mamie Scollard, 'cause she ain't got no mudder and never had. Nobody's ever owned Mamie, an' I want dis club t'adopt her."

"An' we will," cried a number of voices, for the little girls of the slums were as tender-hearted as they were quick-witted; and any appeal to their generosity was always responded to. And so it was that Mamie became the treasurer.

When the voting had subsided and quiet was re-

stored, Richard sang several songs, and, when he saw the glad faces of his little auditors, a great longing to be good and helpful filled his soul, and then he thought of a pure, fair face; of a soft voice sweeter than any music that he had ever heard; of a great soul full of faith and fire and enthusiasm, and he realized how very far apart they were. But it was only sentiment, after all. Religious sentiment makes one sigh and hope and write poetry. Regeneration makes one fight evil because it is evil, and cry out in agony for good because it is good.

"I want to walk home with you, Katie," he said, turning to the president as the members were giving their club cheer of

"Finnegan, Finnegan, ha, ha, ha!
Win again, win again, rah, rah, rah!
Who said she wanted her mamma?
Bah, Bah, Bah!"

"Dat's fine," said Katie, pretending not to have heard Richard's request.

"Yes, indeed," he responded. "Now, Miss Finnegan, which way?"

Katie looked at him for a moment and said, "I guess you're a dead gone Christian all right, so lets get out into de street an' I'll tell yez."

When they reached the sidewalk she cleared her

Comedy and Tragedy in Chinatown 135

throat several times and then said, "It's like dis—I haven't got no home."

"Haven't got any home!" cried Richard, in amazement. "Well, where do you sleep?"

"In a stable," said Katie, blushing a deep red. "You see me old aunt died, and I sent de kids, me one brudder an' two sisters, to an institushin last week. I'll get 'em out as soon as I get work, ye know, an' dey're in de best o' spirits."

"Why, Katie, this is awful," said Richard.

"Not a bit," said Katie, trying to look as easy as possible. "You see, Mr. Masterson, if I had a nice home I'd be worryin' about de kids, an' tinkin' how dey'd enjoy dis an' dat t'ing, but, bein' as der're better off dan I, I'm just glad about deyre condition."

"Well, that is philosophy," said Richard, looking admiringly at his little friend; "but you are not going to sleep in any stable to-night, for I am going to give you money for a room in a Christian hotel after you have a good meal with me."

At this juncture the two turned into the brightly lighted Bowery at the corner of Doyers Street, and they noticed that a great crowd had collected on Chatham Square, and that, judging by the excitement, something terrible had happened.

"It's a seaside," said Katie. "He's kilt hisself," and just then Richard noticed that John and Mrs.

de Rutyer were kneeling beside a man, and that blood was flowing from his left temple and a revolver was clutched in his right hand.

"Oh, he's only a crook," said a policeman coming up. "That's Jersey Bill. I guess he couldn't do any more jobs, so he done himself up. He's an' old 'con'—here, get outer the way there till the ambulance picks it up."

"Do what you can for him, and I will be responsible for any amount of money necessary," said Mrs. de Rutyer to the ambulance surgeon, and she handed him her card as Richard made his way to John's side.

The policeman looked a little abashed, and the young surgeon bowed gravely, and the ambulance dashed off toward Bellevue Hospital.

The calm, cool Mrs. de Rutyer was nearly hysterical, and when she was introduced to Richard, whom John termed "a new inhabitant of the kingdom of heaven," she thought of that other poor outcast she had just seen borne away to his death-bed, Christless and friendless, and she broke into a fit of weeping so uncontrollable that John and Richard insisted upon her going to the little dingy drug-store between Doyers and Pell Streets, and getting something for her nerves from the shabby-looking clerk who dispensed "real fruit syrups" to customers.

Comedy and Tragedy in Chinatown 137

After she had grown calm, John suggested that they all go around to the Chinese restaurant on Pell Street and have some tea and a talk. Katie clung to Richard, and he patted her hand gently as they walked along the streets, where the very odor of sin seemed to fill the place.

In the Chinese tea-rooms, which were reached by climbing two flights of dirty stairs, were girls of the street, with their painted faces and gaudy dresses, and roughs from the Bowery, who glowered under rakish-looking hats at the visitors. There were a few club-men from up-town with a couple of fashionably dressed women, who formed a slumming party, and felt it was all extremely interesting, and laughed as they made a pretence of eating "chop sui" with their chop-sticks. To them those wretched girls over there at the other tables were only "types" and "cases," and the miserable old hags huddling in the hall downstairs, as well as the bleary-eyed young men, were a part of the show they had come to see, and they felt that they would miss them indeed did they disappear before the carriage came.

CHAPTER XVI

"CHOP SUI" AND JEALOUSY

"WHO is this little girl?" asked Mrs. de Rutyer, taking Katie by the hand.

"A little friend of mine," said Richard, who hoped to tell the story of her friendlessness to the stately lady beside him at an opportune moment, but he counted without the president of the Finnegan Association, who did not believe in any false delicacy or any beating about the bushes.

"I hain't got me room rent, so me landlady tol' me to move to de Waldorf," said Katie, with a curious sort of a dry laugh; "an' dis gent was 'bout gettin' me somethin' t'eat an' jollyin' me 'long, an' makin' me feel good wid stories of havin' a place to have me nightmares in to-night, when we met yez."

Mrs. de Rutyer took up her lorgnette and levelled it at Katie, and then surveyed Richard.

"Chop sui for four," said a big, fat Chinaman at her elbow, whose pigtail was adorned with black, rich-looking ribbons, and whose arms were loaded

with the favorite Chinese hash, several bowls of rice, and a big tin-pot of tea. Mrs. de Rutyer now turned her lorgnette on him, and watched him carefully wash the cups and as carefully throw the water on the floor, after which he chattered something to a little Mongolian who wore an elaborate psycheknot and a flowered blouse.

Presently one of the painted girls at a near-by table said to her companion in an audible voice, "Look at that kid wid the swells. She hain't got no friend; her old aunt died d'odder day."

Katie looked at her for a moment, and then said loudly and clearly: "Dis kid *has* a friend, an' His name is Jesus. She asked Him fur a bed and some grub, and both is purvided. Say," going over to the table and laying her hands on the girl's shoulders, "won't you ask Jesus to do the same for you w'at He's done for me?"

"You! Me!" cried the girl, in a loud, laughing voice. "Why, you're only a poor, innocent kid. I'm a devil."

"How interesting!" cried the club-men and the society women who were looking for a scene, but the two girls left the restaurant after passing audible remarks about "guys" and "nannies" and "high-toned monkeys," and Katie returned to the table to eat her "chop sui" and submit to the continual pressure of Mrs. de Rutyer's hand.

"You will come home with me to-night, dear," she said.

"Will I?" gasped the president of the Finnegan Association. "Well," looking at Mrs. de Rutyer, "yer a swell sure enough an' nearly as nice as a wax figure, but I asked *Him* to-day for a bed, and I guess He made up His mind to gimme a good one. Ah, I tell ye [this to Richard] He's good. Don't I wish I could kiss de ground He walks on."

"Oh, how the poor love Him," said Mrs. de Rutyer, and John winced at her words. Had Katherine been there he knew that she would have said nothing to make Katie feel she was not one of them, but then no one was like her, he assured himself as he set his lips tightly together.

"Who was the poor fellow in Chatham Square?" asked Richard, turning to Mrs. de Rutyer.

"An ex-convict," she said, sadly. "He is only out of Sing Sing Prison a month or so. Miss Irving and I met him at the mission several times, and I tried to talk to him about his soul. He always laughed at my efforts, but, strange to say, he whispered a message to me for Miss Irving to-night after we found him lying on the square. 'Tell her to hunt up the fellow who used to go into the services with me,' he said, 'or he will be the next one; and tell her that I have not forgotten her sweet

words of hope, but they came too late.’ I asked him if he would like to see her, and he said, ‘Oh, yes, so much. We knew she always meant what she said, but it is too late now.’ ”

“Yes, that is it,” said Richard, in an abstracted sort of a way. “Katherine means it. It is not a duty with her; she loves us.”

Mrs. de Rutyer and John looked at him in amazement, but Katie pressed his hand and said, “Dat’s just de knocker, Mr. Masterson. ’Tain’t dat Miss Irving has made any vows to God to hunt us up, but dat she jest can’t help it. She’s full o’ love for us, just like Him. Don’t shoot, please,” this to Mrs. de Rutyer, who was lifting her lorgnette again.

“Dear Katherine,” said Mrs. de Rutyer smiling, between her words, at what she believed to be Katie’s ignorance of firearms. Then, as she helped herself to a little more “chop sui,” she said, turning to Richard in her frank, queer way: “You know, Mr. Pierce and Miss Irving have been sweethearts since they were thirteen.”

“Indeed?” said Richard, and he felt that his tongue was cleaving to the roof of his mouth. John blushed slightly, and both men looked at each other.

“I have been urging Katherine to hasten the happy event,” said Mrs. de Rutyer, smiling roguishly at John, for whom she was developing a warm

affection, "but she says you will have to stop your practical jokes first; so I advise you to be careful and cultivate sense."

"I prefer to let her teach me how," said John, smiling and blushing like a school-girl; and then Richard suddenly remembered an up-town engagement, and, shaking hands with his friends, bade them good-night.

"Come here and kiss me," said Katie, standing on her tip-toes, and as he bent to comply with her request, "I'm only fourteen; but, say, I'm fond of you, I am. God bless you."

A little of the hardness left Richard's face, but it appeared again when he reached the street, and it grew and grew as he thought deeply of what John had said. He swore silent oaths, and a positively hideous look was on his face when he reached the saloon he and his worthy partner owned.

"Give me a bracer, Ned," he said, and in a few moments he had gulped down five brandies.

"Has the girl given you the go-by, Richie?" asked Ned, looking at him.

"She is as false as all the rest," said Richard, bitterly, in his anger forgetting his ordinary good sense and the fact that he had no right to be angry over anything. For the time being he had forgotten, too, what a thorough rascal he was, which is

a way some people have when things do not go pleasantly with them. Let their plans mature, and they sigh that theirs is not a better cause; but let them not mature, and they show their teeth.

"I know who she is," said Ned slyly. "Old Preacher Irving's daughter, ain't it?"

"Well, supposing it is."

"Oh, give her up and stick to yer wife, an' look after the business, Richie," said Ned. "I tell you, women are boiling water, and men are lobsters for bothering about them."

At this juncture a man walked in from the bar, and, when Richard turned around and saw the Christian Merchant, it seemed to him that his blood became cold.

"Wh—aa—t are you doing here?" cried Richard, feebly.

"I have been looking for you for some time," said the merchant, piously. "I wanted to be a help to you. I often met you at the mission, you know."

"Does *she* know I keep a saloon?" he gasped.

"No, nor anything else," said the merchant, looking wise, "and you mustn't think, my son, that you cannot win her heart, for you can; only, of course," with an upward glance at the ceiling, "you must belong to the Lord."

Richard congratulated himself that the merchant

heard nothing about his wife, for he had not yet learned that the worthy Brother Grey had a queer habit of hearing nothing he did not want to remember at the time. Truth to tell, Brother Grey heard the whole conversation, as he had furtively entered the place a few moments before with the intention of getting some brandy to raise his spirits. As he was a man of resources, his piety came to the rescue, and when he heard Katherine's name mentioned he changed his order of brandy to one of sarsaparilla, over which he sighed and concocted his statement of seeking for Richard.

"But she is to marry that praying Pierce, isn't she?" asked Richard, hotly.

"Be calm, my son, and do not talk lightly about prayer," said the Christian Merchant, softly. "Miss Irving does not care a bit for him. You ought to know that she cares for you."

"Oh, so it seemed," cried Richard, laying his head on the table. "She does not know I love her, though. I have told her how much I liked to be with her, and she seemed to be glad to have me near her."

This was all said in a reminiscent way, but the Christian Merchant was listening to every word with avidity, and barely succeeded in hiding his smiles by gravely brushing his face with his hands.

A whispered conversation ensued, and when it was over, the Christian merchant and the saloon-keeper shook hands warmly and parted.

“The old fool thinks he will save my soul by getting me the girl,” laughed Richard, as he went to bed.

“When Miss Irving goes to expose me I think she will find that her friend the enemy can play at that game, too,” said the Christian Merchant to himself as he rode home, and then he muttered with an ugly grin, “A fine missionary that—in love with a married man who deals in rum.”

CHAPTER XVII

RICHARD MAKES A CONFESSION OF LOVE

It was after Katherine had returned from the little post-office, where she had been to post letters to her father and John, that she saw Richard Master-son making his way toward her.

"You here?" she cried in amazement, looking up to him.

"And you?" he exclaimed, with a surprised look on his face that seemed as genuine as her own. Then explanations followed, during which Richard explained that he had been to Poughkeepsie to see a friend, and took a notion to spend the night in some quiet little wayside village, where he could think and be at rest.

"I am so glad you stopped off here," said Katherine, and there was genuine pleasure in her voice. "It is such a restful spot for the heart to meet God in. Alice—I mean Miss Masland—and I were thinking of going for a bicycle ride, the day is so beautiful."

Richard pretended not to notice the name, but he

turned to her with a look of pleading on his face and said, "Come with me for a walk instead. I want to know so much, and I have so much to fight against. I came here to fight it, for it is threatening to crush me. Do come and talk to me. I dread being alone with my doubts and fears any longer."

"But she will be waiting for me," remonstrated Katherine in a hesitating way. Her real hesitancy was caused by the question arising in her mind whether she ought to forget conventional rules in remembering the need of an immortal soul. He said he wanted her spiritual help, and surely that ought to be enough, she told herself.

Richard broke her train of thought by saying: "Your friend is good and she is safe, while I feel as if I dare not face the world and its temptations any longer. Oh, Miss Irving, you do not know what it means to a man like me to become a Christian."

"Perhaps I do not, Mr. Masterson," said Katherine, "but I know God, and I know that He is able to save to the uttermost. Supposing you come up to the house and have a pleasant talk with Mr. Roberts, and then you and I can ask God to help and bless you."

"No! No!" cried Richard. "I do not care to

meet strangers. I came here for quiet and rest and communion with God. When I saw you I thought that possibly you would care to help me, but, after all, I suppose you have to abide by Mrs. Grundy's advice, even if you have renounced the world, the flesh, and the devil."

"Are you sure I can help you spiritually, Mr. Masterson. If you are, I will have no scruples about Mrs. Grundy."

"You have it in your power to help me to-day," he answered her, "unless, indeed, you cannot trust me. Is it that, Miss Irving—do you trust me?"

She looked into his eyes for a moment, and then said: "Of course I do; you belong to God."

Richard wished then that he had not asked the question, and a loathing of himself and the Christian Merchant, and fate in general overcame him; but, when Katherine pointed to a little street that led out into a wide country road and said, "Let us go that way for a short walk," he turned and went with her, a look of triumph on his face.

It was a beautiful summer day, and, as the two walked slowly along between glimpses of field and stream and meadow toward Wappinger's Falls, both of their hearts grew glad, and in one there was a great song of praise going up to God, because there were beautiful spots and true hearts in the world.

John Pierce's face was seen by one of the walkers in many a wayside flower and stray sunbeam that day. Richard asked Katherine many questions, and they talked about God and His world for several minutes, and then they came to a steep hill, at which Katherine looked askance and then stood still.

"Let us rest here," said Richard. "It is an inviting spot." Katherine concluded it was, too, so they chose the shady side of the road, which was carpeted with soft, velvety moss. Richard found two stones and placed them near the road fence, and then he drew a newspaper from his pocket and covered the one Katherine was to sit on, and she joked in a light-hearted way about his care of her, telling him that the devotion of those she led to Christ was one of the most beautiful things of her life."

"I wish I might care for you forever, darling," he said, suddenly and with great vehemence, and then he noticed that Katherine was looking at him with a surprised, grieved look in her eyes, from which all the glad light of a moment before had fled.

"I love you ; my queen among women, I love you, and have, ever since I first saw you," he cried, looking at her with all the longings of his heart in his face.

She looked up at him as if she was not quite sure of what he said, and then said slowly: "I am dis-

appointed in you. I thought you understood why I came here with you to-day; what have I done to cause you to speak to me in this way?"

"Is my love, then, an insult to you? Is it nothing to you that you have won my——"

"Mr. Masterson, I refuse to listen."

"Do not say that, Katherine," he cried, and then she stood up before he could say any more, and, looking him calmly in the face, said: "I am Miss Irving, sir. I will not allow you to talk to me in this way."

"Is it because you are promised to Pierce?" he asked, almost fiercely.

She looked at him with a calm, stern look he had never before seen on her face, and said in a voice that chilled him: "Mr. Masterson!"

"But you are engaged to him—tell me, Katherine, are you or are you not?" he asked, braving a look that only his mad love could be blind to.

She looked at him, and again he noticed that where the twinkle of mirth or softness of light usually was, there was a something he could not understand. For a few seconds he returned the gaze, and then the weaker quailed before the stronger, and he hung his head and said piteously, "Oh, my darling, I love you, and I cannot help it."

"No Christian should ever give that as an ex-

Richard Makes a Confession of Love 151

cuse," she said in a gentle, though firm, voice, and then she turned to him suddenly and said, "Who are you, Mr. Masterson? Are you married or single? What is your trade or profession? How has your past life been spent?"

"I—I—don't understand," gasped Richard, and his guilty past and present all loomed up before him in an instant. She looked at him for a second, and then said in the straightforward, simple way she always spoke of things, "You have told me nothing about yourself. I trusted you and came on this walk with you because a man made new by Christ is a gentleman, no matter what the past has been. I believe in you because I believe in Him."

"She knows nothing about me, that is so," said Richard, breathing a little more freely and looking a little happier as the thought occurred to him that, after all, this may be the reason why she refused to listen to him. "Of course, you can trust me," he said, and then added, "I am a broker in——"

She interrupted him with a wave of her hand and said, "I was not inviting confidence; I never do that."

"Will you be my friend still?" he asked, looking at her.

"Certainly I will," she said. "I am the friend of every child of God, of every sinner, of everyone who needs me."

"Oh, such a friend I do not want," said Richard, angrily.

"I never tell people I care for them only for Christ's sake unless their actions make it necessary," said Katherine, slowly. "Yours have done so today. However, do not think that the love of Christ is patronizing, cold, or stereotyped—it is the only pure, unselfish love this world has ever known."

"Define such love, please," said Richard, sneeringly.

"St. Paul has done it," she answered. "It suffereth long and is kind." Then she paused, and said firmly, "I have long since stopped looking at things as the generality of people do, and have a strange custom of analyzing them for myself. Poets and painters may glorify the grand passion; but, when we look at it from an ethical and general point of view, what do we see? Simply this. Here is a man, there a woman, who would do a thousand noble or ignoble things to win for themselves that which they seek, and which they believe to be requisite to their own happiness. Of course, it is not always so. I am glad that it is not."

"You always speak the truth, and you do not dissemble," said Richard. Then, catching the light from her eyes—light that a thought of John Pierce brought there—he said, seizing her hands and bend-

Richard Makes a Confession of Love 153

ing over until his face nearly touched hers: "Darling, I would be willing to die for you. It is wrong, I suppose; but I never could give you up to another. Oh, why did I ever meet you, if it were not that——"

He sees her face, and stops. The look there would awe a braver man. Just then a buggy drove by in which two men, heavily coated and with hats pulled down over their eyes, passed. Richard noticed that one had a camera in his hand, and he looked a little curiously at them, but Katherine paid no attention at all to the vehicle or its occupants.

"I shall return at once," she said, with cold decision. "I think you will admit that I have proved my case. I am sorry that you took advantage of my trust in you, to talk to me the way you have. I am disappointed in you, and," with the frankness with which she always spoke, "I do not believe in your love. Noble, true love is always noble and honorable. Whatever love you offered me would be refused, but this cowardly method is intolerable."

"Well, I do not pretend to have any of the heroic in me, Miss Irving."

"Any man who is in Christ is a new creation," she said, in an aggrieved voice. "I am expecting nothing of you, independent of your Saviour."

"Stuff and nonsense!" he said fiercely, and, as Katherine looked at him with her clear, soul-search-

ing eyes, a horrible suspicion about his conversion crossed her mind ; but she, who was full of faith for everybody, and who never wronged anyone because of an unkind surmise, turned aside for a moment and then said, with a sweet smile, " I am sorry, but I see now that I am not the one to help you. Let us go back to the village."

" Let me accompany you, Miss Irving ; I shall offend no more ? " he asked, and, quiet as a lamb and as subdued as a pettish child who runs to its mother's arms after a fit of ill-temper, Richard walked on beside her, his head hanging wearily over his chest.

" What do you think of the mother-love ? " he said, breaking the painful silence when they had walked some distance. He scarcely dared to speak, but he felt he had to hear her voice again.

" That which really deserves the name is the most beautiful gift of God, the most charming crown of a woman's glory," said Katherine, after a short pause, " but, alas, there is very little of it."

" Little of it ! " echoed Richard. " Does not the average mother love her child ? "

" Yes," said Katherine, " until the child does something that displeases or perhaps disgraces her, and then father and mother storm and fret, and talk about their gray hairs being brought to dishonor, and as, in the case of the lovers' love, the child is the

Richard Makes a Confession of Love 155

last one thought of. As long as the child has beauty or talent or goodness, or as long as she is obedient, there is a great display of mother-love; and it is genuine, mind you, too; but let these graces disappear, and, though pity may succeed anger in the mother's heart, that early love never returns, for her ambitions and hopes have been disappointed, and the loveliness she admired is gone, leaving only her child."

"How clever you are," said Richard, looking at her admiringly. "I did not know any woman thought as much as you do. You have nearly converted me to the cause of woman suffrage."

"Of course," said Katherine, smiling at his suggestion, "there are true mothers here and there, and there are, too, many old maids whose hearts and homes ought to be filled with the little babies whom clumsy, ignorant wives are beating with sticks and defiling with examples of coarse and brutal living. God does not agree with the census-takers' definition of mother."

"I agree with you there," said Richard, and, as he said it, the buggy with the muffled men passed by them again and drove rapidly toward the village. Then Richard remembered the attempted suicide in Chatham Square, and told Katherine about it.

"Poor boy, I remember him well," she said, and

a great heaviness came over her heart as she said it. "Oh, what unhappiness and sin and sadness there is in the world; how hearts are breaking, and men hounded to death by the dogs of Satan," she thought, and the holy longing that had been filling her heart ever since she was sixteen spoke with a new voice, as the face of the man who had wandered into the mission so often rose before her.

"I will go to New York in a few hours," she said, suddenly, turning to Richard. "If he is alive I may be able to help him; if not, I will return in the morning. Oh, Mr. Masterson," turning to him suddenly as they came to the outskirts of the village, "when are you coming to stand as a hero in the fight for God? I am sure you could win many souls for Him, for, though you are a little vain, you are not fanatical or possessed of any of the little prejudices so many men of your age are. You need experience and teaching and grace. That is all. I will forget all you have said to-day, but my dear father and Mr. Pierce must be your spiritual guides in the future. You will always be remembered kindly by me as God's dear child; and, some day, you will see the wisdom of a course you might be tempted to rebel against now. Of course," this very quietly, "you have offended me, but I am quite willing to forgive it all."

Richard Makes a Confession of Love 157

Richard felt unable to give vent to the bitterness in his heart. Her earnest enthusiasm subdued him, and he felt a little bit ashamed and a little bit guilty. They both stood still for a moment, and then Katherine said good-by to him, and left him standing there. A few moments later she returned, and, shaking his hand, said, "God keep you, Mr. Masterson, and lead you into the light of His own day."

He set his teeth firmly together. She looked pityingly at him for a few moments, and then, with head erect and her eyes looking into his, she said, "I am your friend always—do remember that."

"My friend?" he said, laughing dryly. "Yes, I will try to."

"When do you return to New York?" she asked, lingering for a moment, for she saw he was hurt, and her tender heart regretted that; though she would unsay nothing she had said.

"When you do, if you wish it," he answered, eagerly.

"I do not wish it, nor would I like it at all," she said with decision, so he lifted his hat and walked away rapidly.

Alice was sitting on the piazza of Mrs. Roberts's house and looking thoughtfully out into the village street when Katherine ran up to her, and, in the playful way she assumed with those of whom she

was fond, commenced to ruffle her hair and chide her with dreaming "without a nightie on."

"But I am not dreaming, dear. I am thinking of very practical things," said Alice. "I am going to be a great cook."

"Oh!" said Katherine, sinking into a chair near by. "I thought a great orator or a painter, you said it with such impressiveness."

"And I will be both," said Alice. "My biscuits will speak a new gospel of health and my soups and broths will paint cheeks a rosy red."

"My! what a command of language you're getting, Alice!" said Katherine, laughing. "Have you been practising all that to say as soon as I arrived?"

"You were my inspiration," said Alice, catching her friend's humor, and then, with great seriousness she added, "I have always been bothered very much because of a lack of the power of expression, which I am painfully conscious of. I have no command of language whatever."

Katherine looked at her ruefully, and, noting the gloomy, thoughtful air she wore, said, slowly, "Alice, have you ever tried stepping on a tack, or falling off a bicycle near to a red bull?"

"Adventures like these always make me speechless," said Alice, and then they both laughed heartily.

Richard Makes a Confession of Love 159

"Do you know, dear Miss Irving, that it is these natural, happy tricks of yours that make me feel so much at home with you," said Alice, impressively. "If you were forever praying with me, and making careful little speeches, and fearful of letting me see your real, true self, I would be forever conscious of the gulf that lies between us."

"That is a fine speech, Alice, and I am sorry to interrupt you," said Katherine, "because you are so eloquent that you contradict all of your previous statements, but I must not let you say that which is not true. You cannot be conscious of what does not exist. There is no gulf between me and my dear sister, and if there ever was, He, together with our mutual affection, has bridged it over."

"Tell me how to love you truly, how to be more worthy of you," said Alice, looking up into her friend's eyes with the light of an idealist and a hero-worshipper shining in her own.

Katherine drew her hand within her own little one, and, with the look of warmth and affection that won her so many hearts, said: "Alice, dear, you love me truly now. You know, when two little chickens want to be together and comfortable, they cuddle under their mother's wings, and the closer they get to her the closer they get to each other. Let it be so with us and Christ. Each time you draw nearer to Him you are nearer to me."

"That is a beautiful thought," said Alice, slowly.

"Now tell me about your culinary ambitions, Alice," said Katherine, who always combined the ideal and the real, "because when you have won fame I want to be prepared to see in *The Ladies' Hearthstone* all about Alice Masland's famous recipes for grizzled bear and catnip-tea."

"I am not an orator, nor have I the wonderful grace of soul and body that you have, Miss Irving; but I want to be useful, and I believe that a great deal of domestic unhappiness, as well as the wretchedness of working men and women, is caused by poorly cooked food. Mrs. Roberts agrees with me, and she, who has made her housekeeping a science, is going to teach me."

"And then, Alice?"

"Then I hope to return to New York and impart my information to those who need it."

"And it will be a splendid article of religion," said Katherine, her face lighting up with pleasure. "I always knew I would be proud of my Alice yet."

"And you will some day," said Alice, in a whisper.

Mrs. Roberts, a fine, happy-looking, genial woman with pale-blue eyes continually bubbling with smiles, stepped out in the porch at this juncture, and then Katherine announced, what indeed she had almost forgotten, that she was returning to

Richard Makes a Confession of Love 161

New York. This caused a good deal of protest, but, when she explained the cause of her decision, Alice ran to pack her satchel, and Mrs. Roberts to make a few sandwiches and gather some apples to solace the traveller on her journey.

"All aboard for New York," was the cry that reached their ears, as the three women arrived at the little station.

A hasty good-by was said, and then the train started. As it did so, Alice thought she caught a glimpse of the Christian Merchant's face, and she felt strangely troubled and perplexed, but was exceedingly thankful that her beloved friend was not travelling alone—God was with her.

Katherine had scarcely seated herself when, to her dismay and very evident displeasure, Richard Masterson came up, mumbling an apology about missing the earlier train. They were alone in the car except for a rheumatic-looking old gentleman at the other end, who looked angrily at the new-comers for disturbing a dream he commenced at Poughkeepsie.

Richard looked at him, then took a seat beside Katherine, and looked as if he wished the old man would take up the thread of his dream-weaving again.

CHAPTER XVIII

KATHERINE'S EYES ARE OPENED AND JOHN IS OFFERED A WIFE

WHEN Richard sat near the woman he loved, and felt that for two hours they would sit thus side by side, a great and unutterable longing to win her love and to have her look at him as a woman does when a man has become all the world to her, took possession of him. And yet his conscience asked him, "And what then?" But he dare not answer such a question; he dare not even think of it; for Richard was a creature of impulse rather than a studied villain.

"Just to have her love me," was the only reasonable answer he could give to all the "ifs" that his reason would bring up, and to his impetuous soul that seemed to be a sufficient one.

For five minutes there was absolute silence except for the snoring of the rheumatic gentleman who had returned to his castles in the air; and then Richard said, suddenly, in a fierce, dogged voice: "Will you ever love me—tell me? I waited for this train pur-

posely to know. I could not go away from the place where you were."

Katherine turned away angrily enough now, but Richard was too blind to see it, and, without realizing what he was doing, he threw his arms around her.

"I did not think you were a coward," she said, looking calmly at him.

"I am not, Katherine," he cried, "but I love you."

"You are weak and cowardly," she answered, and then there arose within her a physical strength that he never dreamed and she scarcely realized she was possessed of, and she threw his arms from around her as if they were a baby's. When she was free she turned to him and said, with flashing eyes and set determination:

"The man that I marry must be pure and good; he must respect women, and be able to bring to me a life that is fair and white. If he has wronged anyone he must be ready to right it, no matter what the cost may be; and, above all, he must have conquered himself through Christ."

As she finished, she turned to go, and came face to face with the Christian Merchant, who mockingly lifted his hat and passed into the next car, without deigning to cast a glance at Richard, who was sitting in his seat, the picture of anger and despair combined.

Katherine felt pained and sad when she took her seat in an adjoining car. She felt unhappy about the Christian Merchant's presence, and a strange foreboding of evil filled her heart.

"But God knows and He will vindicate me," she assured herself, and then she leaned her arm against the window and looked out.

The beautiful Hudson never looked more lovely. There was the soft flush of a fair summer afternoon on the face of the waters, and the young green that clothed the mountain-side, and the trees that cast their shadows over the warm sunlight, brought to Katherine's heart a message of peace and quiet. The sleepy Catskills were not far away, and in the direction in which the train was speeding were the hills that guarded West Point, and farther down and on the sloping bank of the beautiful river was fair Nyack, nestling in the valley behind which the gray-wooded land rose many miles above. Little by little the lovely vista, which in other days rocked the cradle of song and story, loomed up before Katherine's vision. Quiet Peekskill, with its country roads and hilly streets; lovely Sing Sing, where men like the poor fellow in Chatham Square were suffering the penalty of wrong-doing, and where the beautiful hills on its own side and the loftier ones on the other side of the river, coupled with the majestic

grandeur all around her, caused Katherine to say almost aloud, "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about them that put their trust in Him."

There were tears in her eyes. Richard was not converted—of that she was sure now, for no man, she told herself, made new by the blood of Christ would act as he had done. She tried to pray for him, and a little feeling of indignation would choke down her supplications. No woman likes to be fooled, and the thought that he had pretended to be converted through her, and that she had rejoiced with him and believed in him, made her grievously disappointed. And then the deceit of it all! Her face grew hot, and the human nature in her rose to the surface for an instant.

"I trusted him," she said to herself; "I believed he was honest and manly and, ugh! How could he think I could love a man such as he has proved himself to be?"

But then the Christ love, the mother-love that Katherine's soul was filled with, fought for supremacy and won.

"Poor boy," she said. "Poor, poor, weak, ignorant boy. He thought to win me in that way—as if by falsehood or by transgressing any law of God, goodness and happiness can be secured. Ah,

well, he knows no better; perhaps he has always lived by cunning and craftiness, and knows no other methods to use. Oh, when will poor lost ones learn that they can only be happy when they are in their rightful places in God's plan? Consider the lilies—they grow because God wants them to, and they attempt nothing else; the plant, the bird, the beast of the field, all live according to God's natural laws, and in accordance with His will. The stars and the sun and moon obey the law of their Creator, but the little human planet gets away from the great sun of its attraction and jars on through its course, thinking that the more it jars the happier it will be. Sin is largely the vain ignorance that plans for itself. When the children of God learn that in Him they live and move and have their being, true culture will come."

While Katherine was thus philosophizing, Richard was in the smoking compartment, whither he had gone, swearing to his heart's content, and the Christian Merchant was standing beside him rubbing his hands complacently.

"You are not patient, brother."

"Oh, brother be hanged!" said Richard. "She will not have me."

"You had her in your arms," said the good merchant, looking wisely at him.

"Yes, but against her will."

"No one need know that, though," said Brother Grey, in a low voice. "I saw it and can testify to the truth. I think your visit up here ought to compel her to marry you."

Richard looked at the Christian Merchant for a moment, and then he moved back a pace or two, and, getting behind the amiable brother, kicked him out of the car before anyone had time to interfere. The look on Richard's face made the more adventurous remark that friends should not be interfered with, and one man smilingly offered Richard a bottle. As he was about to drink out of it, his manhood came to the surface, and he handed it back, saying pleasantly, "Some other time, old boy; I am on the train with a lady."

It was about an hour later that the pleasant words "Grand Central Station" fell on Katherine's ears, and she fairly ran from the car and called a cab, into which she hastily sprang, after directing the hackman to drive to Bellevue Hospital as quickly as possible. With a sigh of relief, that had in it a little of pain, she lay back on the cushioned seat and commenced to think, and her thoughts were with the jealous, angry man who followed her in the cab almost immediately behind.

"I do care for him, but he does not understand,

and never can if he remains in his present condition," she said, sobbingly, to herself. "Of course, I never would marry him. Oh, no; it is not that kind of love. How could it be? I think—I should like to marry John. He [here there was a great pause] never loved another woman. He is brave and noble and—and—my John—and I have loved him for a long time."

A soft blush suffused her cheek as she said this, and, glancing out the window, she espied the last object of her thoughts getting into a Forty-second Street car.

"John, John!" she cried, frantically, and a moment later he was sitting beside her, and she, feeling safe and happy and miserable as only a woman can, permitted herself the luxury of a cry that disturbed and pleased the happy and bewildered man who was looking at her with his soul's longing in his clear, gray eyes. It disturbed him because she was unhappy, and it pleased him because she was spoiling his beautiful white Ascot tie with her tears. That white tie would forever more be precious to him.

"John, I had a proposal to-day."

"Ah," said John, and he felt that his collar had grown several inches too small for him.

"Do you think I would be happy and better, married, than—as—I—am now?" she asked, a trace of coquetry brightening her wet eyes.

"Perhaps, girly, perhaps," said John, stroking his hair.

"And you, John?" this a little daringly.

"I shall be happy, Katherine, if you are. I shall rejoice with you in all your joys, for I love you, and we are both members of the body of Christ."

"And you have loved me how long, John?"

He looked at her a little surprised and said, "Since you were thirteen—no, I think only since to-day, Katherine. You know I saw you first on the night of your thirteenth birthday."

"Yes, and, John, what a howling swell you were with your twenty-five cent diamond-pin and awe-imposing evening dress borrowed for the occasion; but," with one of her rare, wonderful smiles, "thirteen is an unlucky number."

"And yet you promised to marry me that night, Katherine. You remember, your mother was talking to my father about——"

"About how wilful I was," supplemented Katherine. "Poor mamma! One of the griefs of my life is that she died without understanding me. My longing for my little sisters in the slums she never, never could understand."

"But she knows now, girly."

"Yes, so she does—John, you are such a comfort. How nice it will be to have you love me always and

ever, and oh, John," creeping closer to him, "to know that you are true and good."

"Yes, Katherine, I will always be your true—friend, and I want to be the same to—to—the man you love."

"Kiss me, John."

"Be careful, darling; I am not an angel."

"No, but you are strong and brave and good, and I love you for always," she said, simply.

"But your proposal."

"Yes, John, you had nearly forgotten that."

Blank silence for a few seconds followed, and then this from John: "Darling, let me tell the driver to take us to Central Park and lose us."

"No, John, we are going to Bellevue Hospital," said his sweetheart, with a new and soft light in her eyes, for Katherine Irving never forgot her mission of love in seeking her own.

CHAPTER XIX

HOW AN OUTCAST DIED

THEY are before the big, cold-looking structure on Twenty-sixth Street, known as Bellevue Hospital. A boat has just arrived from Blackwell's Island, and some of the girls who were imprisoned in the Workhouse are returning to what they call "liberty" again, but to what Katherine knows in reality to be the greater slavery of the two. Back to the Bowery, back to Sixth Avenue to walk up and down ; or, rather, to prowl up and down seeking for depraved men to help them to continue the building of hell in their own beings and in the beings of others. They laugh as they pass Bellevue, for they see the saloons near by and know that they can have a drink now, and the drink will give them new courage. It will make them forget ; it will warm them, and it will never point to the big hospital and say, " You will go in there and die friendless and forgotten." But they will.

John tells the cabman to wait until he and Kath-

erine return; and then he speaks to the man at the gate, and they enter.

"There is Mrs. de Rutyer, and—and—why, it is Katie Finnegan," exclaims Katherine, and as they meet, she sees that both have been crying.

"He is dead," says Mrs. de Rutyer, sadly. "I have had the body sent to my house. Come with me."

"Do you think he came to know his Saviour before he was called home?" Katherine asks, eagerly.

"I think he did. I have been with him all day, and I tried to show him the way."

When they reached the gate, Katherine saw Richard standing across the street looking as if he were the very incarnation of fiendishness, and, almost unconsciously, she moved away from Mrs. de Rutyer and took hold of John's hand. When they entered the carriage, she peeped through the window and saw that he was still there, and that there was a look on his face such as she had never seen on it or on any other. The big, honest eyes were glaring, and even the stooping attitude the man assumed, suggested the beast of prey ready to spring on his victim; and in this, the body was merely the voice of the mind, as it always is, for Richard's thoughts were murderous. None of the others saw him, so

Katherine said nothing, and scarcely a word passed between the four until the cab again drew up, this time before the beautiful home of Mrs. de Rutyer, on Fifth Avenue. A servitor in the de Rutyer livery opened the door, and the mistress of the house invited her guests into her beautiful drawing-room, in which the paintings and statuary suggested a semi-religious, semi-worldly household, full of beauty, harmony, and quiet rest.

Mrs. de Rutyer's husband was a club-man who dabbled in politics, in plans of city reform, and in æsthetic religion. He smoked a little, drank a little, went to the race-course a little, and did a little good. He believed in doing good, he said, and did not object to his wife giving money, but he objected seriously to her giving herself, and laughed at her belief that a sinful man or woman could be "made new," as she was fond of expressing it. He was a big, lusty, jolly-looking man, and he suffered with the gout. He had a military goatee, a bald head, a high forehead, and eyes of a deep black, but now, as his wife entered, one could note nothing except that he was angry.

"Ellen," he said, sharply, "I can stand a good deal, but my patience is nearly exhausted. What do you mean by sending a pauper convict's body here?"

"He is our brother, Walter," his wife answered.

"Stuff and nonsense!" I say. "Was the rascal who stole my watch last week my brother also?"

Mrs. de Rutyer looked appealingly at Katherine, who answered him with a tremor in her voice that told how hurt she was.

"Mr. de Rutyer," she said, "what is the difference between stealing a watch and a piece of land? Your ancestors stole the land you own from weaker men; men weak enough to believe in treaties. Your hungry brother stole your watch without breaking any promise. I would not stay the hand of the law, or condone crime, but I like to define the ugly word for myself."

"Perhaps he was not hungry. There are thieves who wear diamonds and live in style, you know, even though they are always pleaded for by not too courteous Christians as being hungry."

"Some, I suppose, acquire cleverness and grow wealthy on their roguery. They are called capitalists and business men then, I believe, even if they were hungry when they commenced; of course, no one recalls that when they become respectable."

"Like my ancestors," sneered Mr. de Rutyer.

"Mr. de Rutyer," said Katherine, going over to where he stood and looking him in the face, "courtesy would be out of place here. That poor, dead

boy had a right to have had a chance to earn an honest living as well as you had. Your superior virtue did not come with your birth any more than did his. That the land belongs to certain people by the strength of fire and sword and unjust laws, and not to *the* people, does not make it right in God's sight. In this wealthy, great, grand city, men should not shoot themselves because only jail or starvation faced them. I am not pleading for the determined criminal, but for the man whose only alternative is wrong-doing. I am not an anarchist; I am not a dreamer; but I know that God's poor are robbed, are made the objects of degrading charity given by their despoilers, and that God is watching the wine-press, and will not forget."

"The body may be looked at now, ma'am," said the undertaker, suddenly entering the room, and Mrs. de Rutyer led the way into the library, the others following. Katie Finnegan held Katherine's hand tightly, and Mrs. de Rutyer and John followed, while the master of the house, angry and indignant, but touched all the same, went with them.

"Poor, poor boy," said Katherine, bending down and kissing the cold forehead near where the wound was. "You are my brother, and" [a sob] "I wish I might have told you so. The world beat and kicked you, but I love you, and I want you to know

it. Our Father will tell you about a greater love, though, for I am sure He has taken you home. His blessed Son died for you, and He knew how hard was your way."

Not an eye was dry, and it was in spite of himself that Mr. de Rutyer felt his black eyes grow moist; and, when Katie Finnegan said aloud, "Miss Irving, Mr. de Rutyer is his brudder, too; he's cryin', he is," he went to Katherine and gave her his hand. She took it, and looked into his eyes in her usual frank way, and the smile she gave him softened her words of a few minutes before, but made them more pathetic and convincing.

"He said," and Katie pointed to the dead man, "that yez were to go to Sing Sing and tell de fellows erbout God. 'Twas his last words, Miss Irving."

"I shall, dear," said Katherine, simply; "and now, let us sing our old hymn, 'There is sunshine in my soul to-day.' Surely, it is appropriate, for our brother has gone home. I have an assurance that it is to our Father's home—the Father who knew him altogether, and whose boy he was."

And then, in that room of death where the singers saw in the face of death the promise, "I am the resurrection and the life," there arose the glad, happy strains of the sweet gospel song.

"He was sorry he was dyin', he was," said Katie.

"He said to me he'd like to live an' trust hisself to God now; but I guess 'tis all right. Someway, I'm glad, I am, an' I feel like laughin'. I never feeled dat way when anywan kicked de bucket before."

"It is the new sense of faith being developed in you, Katie, dear," said Katherine; and Mrs. de Rutyer smiled at Katie's characteristic statement, and a few moments later John and Katherine said good-night. Mrs. de Rutyer kissed Katherine fondly, and Katie shyly touched her hand with her lips.

Mr. de Rutyer looked grave and thoughtful when they went out, but it was not because of the gout.

John and Katherine walked home in eloquent silence, for the distance was not much between the de Rutyer home and the parsonage, and it was with a very good grace that Mrs. Gleason admitted them. Indeed, she was acquiring a fondness for John that to him was doubly flattering now that he was to be one of the family.

"Sure, the docthor is out, Miss, an' 'tis him won't be in until eleven o'clock, he said; 'tis eight now, and, sure, 'tis surprised he'll be to see yez home." All this by way of gratuitous information.

"Very well, Mrs. Gleason," said Katherine, kindly, and she took the cook's rough hand in her own gentle one and rubbed it softly; and poor Mrs. Gleason looked at her as if she were an angel, and told

herself she would give a month's wages for that caress.

"Mr. Pierce and I will have a little chat, and will not detain you, cookie, dear," she said, with a smile that was peculiarly her own. So she and John were left alone again.

"John," she said, drawing a stool near where he sat and looking up into his face, "I must tell you about my proposal," and John, very much surprised and pained, listened to the whole story. When she had finished he said, looking down at her with a hard look around his mouth, "He is married, Katherine."

"Married!" screamed Katherine. "John, are you sure?"

"Yes, girlie, he is married and keeps a saloon, and is no more converted than is his partner."

"John," cried the horrified girl, and she trembled with indignation as she recalled the events of the past few weeks, his avowals of grace, his pretensions, his penitence, his protestations of love, and his pretended longings. Oh, the shame of it all; the wickedness of the man, the hypocrisy! No tears could come to Katherine's eyes, for her pride was wounded, her faith outraged; but, though these things affected her, and they did, or she would not have been a woman, yet her strongest feeling was that another soul was lost to honor and to God.

"John," she said, after looking earnestly at his face, "cynics are blind beings who call their closet the world, and its rattling, grinning skeleton the man made in the image of God. Richard Master-son has been false, but he is only one among thousands who are true."

"No believer in Christ can be a cynic, Katherine, dear."

"No, and no one who has a John and a father such as I have, can, either—oh, John, supposing you had never been born?"

John admitted that it would be a terrible world for somebody if that interesting event had not occurred, and then, for fully five minutes, this foolish pair became as foolish as all others do under similar conditions, and actually sighed at the thought expressed by each one incoherently as, "Supposing we had never met?"

"You are sure you love me, Katherine?" John asks, and he holds his breath, awaiting her answer.

"Oh, John, you know I do," she replies, hiding her face on his shoulder.

"Yes, but I wanted to hear you say it," he answered, frankly, and then he added a lot of other things that no novice is able to chronicle.

As he opened the hall door to go, she ran after him and said: "John, come to see me to-morrow.

You must come often now. I—I want you so much.”

“My Katherine,” he cried, and as he repeated it he wondered why he had never noticed before that his voice was full of music. Then he kissed her hand softly, and went down the stoop the happiest man among New York’s millions.

CHAPTER XX

A SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL STRUGGLE

"WHAT a day it has been," said Katherine to herself, as she re-entered the little parlor. She glanced at the piano, and the music of the Maiden's Prayer was wafted on the air to her, and once again she heard Richard's impassioned voice as he told her of the noble longings of his soul. Her face grew stern, and a little hardness around the mouth changed its sweet expression. She leaned back in her chair and looked up at the ceiling, and a little mocking laugh escaped her. Something within her said, "The scoundrel," and something very much like anger and indignation, and a desire to shake her hand in his face and tell him what a cringing hypocrite he was, possessed her.

"Why did God allow me to be deceived thus?" she asked herself, and there was a trace of bitterness in the words. "A saloon-keeper, married, unconverted. Oh, well, I knew the latter was true to-day, but God knew it all, and knew it all the time—and, supposing I had loved him, what then?"

Katherine had never supposed what would happen had black been white, or had she not been born; but, of course, this was different. Things are usually "different" when we are cross and unreasonable.

No answer came from the stillness around her, and a little of the unbelief so near to saints and sinners attempted to find a lodging-place in her heart.

"How glad I am that I told him what I thought of him to-day," she said, looking in a self-satisfied sort of a way at the carpet, and then a deep, angry flush at the remembrance of all that took place suffused her face.

"How dare he come here seeking to know more of God!"

There was no answer to this, either; and then the thought of little Stevie entered her mind. Of course, the little fellow must have been his son. This thought was adding fuel to the fire, and visions of a horsewhip were flitting through the gentle slum-missionary's mind, while the hot blood was coursing through her body, and tinting her face with a deep red. I said gentle, but Katherine was neither gentle nor meek by nature. Nor is anyone else possessed of *true* gentleness and *true* meekness any more than Moses was, except as he learns in the same school. Meekness is not inability to be-

A Spiritual and Physical Struggle 183

come angry, but to be angry and sin not. It is the sceptre of self-control grasped by a hand that has grown soft from being held in God's for a long time.

"He lives, and the other poor boy who longed to find the way of righteousness is dead. One lives and prospers, the other had to kill himself or steal. Oh, God, what do you mean?" cried Katherine, getting up and pacing the floor. No voice replies; no comforting thought comes to her; and she leaves the room and goes up to her own little bed-room. Her Bible is lying on the table, and she thumbs its pages carelessly and a little defiantly.

"We walk by faith and not by sight," she reads, and she looks at it crossly and then turns over to the thirty-seventh psalm: "Fret not thyself because of evil-doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity."

"It is God's business, not mine," she says, relinquishing the stewardship she has so often promised to fulfil while life lasted, and then she goes to bed, and for the first time in all her Christian life her half-hour of nightly communion with God is set aside.

She is not sleepy, and is thinking too much to become so.

"How good John is! how true! how faithful!" her thoughts run; "and how good God is to enrich

her with the wealth of this new love!" This mollifies her very much, but there is too much of a weight on the other side to exactly equalize matters. Her pride is hurt. If it was not hurt quite so much, she could find relief in a good feminine cry; but, as it is, she can only think and glower. And yet, beneath it all is the thought, "His soul is lost to God." She ponders and ponders, smiling with her thoughts of John, and frowning with her thoughts of Richard. Then she goes to bed and tries to sleep, and at last succeeds in leaving the troubled events of waking hours for the equally troubled ones of dreamland.

Meanwhile, stirring events were taking place, and, if telepathic influence extended from the street to her bed-room, Katherine's sleeping moments would have been even more restless.

When John left the parsonage he had the uncomfortable feeling of being followed, and, when he turned around after having walked a block, he knew that it was Richard who was dogging his footsteps.

"Well," he said, as the saloon-keeper came up to where he stood.

"Well," repeated Richard, and John saw that he had been drinking.

"Do you wish to see me, Mr. Masterson?"

"Yes, to see how you would look dead," leered Richard, shaking his fist in his face. "How dare

A Spiritual and Physical Struggle 185

you kiss Miss Irving's hand, you popinjay, you miserable-looking missionary, you——”

Whatever else Richard meant to add was checked by the sight of Katherine's father, who had come up unnoticed by either man. Both looked a little nonplussed and stupid. John did not want Dr. Irving to learn of his engagement through a street brawl, and Richard did not care to meet the eyes that were fastened upon him, and of which he had always been more or less afraid.

“I want to see you, Mr. Masterson,” said the clergyman, in the calm, easy way in which he always talked. “I was thinking of sending for you when I met you.”

“Of course, she told him how I acted on the train,” meditated Richard, and then he said aloud in a voice that Dr. Irving noticed was thick and unsteady, “What do you want to see me for?”

“I shall tell you to-morrow. Can you come at two o'clock to my office at the mission?”

“Why not to your house?”

The clergyman's face grew a little red, and he said, “Because I do not wish you to do so.”

“Indeed, soul-saver?”

“I shall expect you, then?” said the man of God, turning to go as if nothing had happened. “I do not think you are in a condition to-night to talk

sensibly, so I will put it off until then. Come, John."

"Good-night, Mr. Masterson."

"Here, Pierce, take this with you," cried Richard, making a furious thrust at John's face with his right hand, but a moment later he found it returned with interest, and, as he puffed on the sidewalk, the stalwart minister of religion found that it was all he could do to keep John from attacking him again."

"You ruffian," said John, and, as the recollection of the indignities to Katherine came to him, his lithe, strong figure trembled with emotion.

The encounter happened on West Forty-fourth Street, and, as it was late, the street was almost deserted, so that no one noticed the scuffle. When Richard rose to his feet he made an attempt to renew his previous attack, but Dr. Irving turned to John and said, sternly: "Mr. Pierce, go home. We have had enough of this pugilistic display."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said John, "but surely you did not want me to let this fellow attack me without resenting it. Another man, in my place, would have thrashed him for his villany whether he gave any provocation or not."

"Please go home, Mr. Pierce," reiterated the clergyman, and John went, not sullenly, but with the air of a man who has done his duty. He had

A Spiritual and Physical Struggle 187

no ill-feeling, and would have given Richard his hand and forgiven him for everything even then, except for his actions in regard to Katherine; and, well, perhaps God would give him grace for that later, he told himself, as he strode toward Eighth Avenue.

"I suppose," said Richard to Mr. Irving when they were left alone on the street, "that your daughter has told you that I proposed marriage to her. No doubt, you are going to scold me."

It was all said in the half playful, half sarcastic way a drunken man assumes, but Mr. Irving paid no attention to the tone, and said, simply, "No, Mr. Grey has told me all I know about you."

"Oh, the Christian Merchant," laughed Richard, a little uneasily.

"I rather doubted your sincerity from the first, but I did not think you were the man I know you to be now," said the clergyman, looking searchingly at Richard, his deep-set eyes peering as if they would scan his soul.

"A married man who neglects his wife and romances about his boy, and a saloon-keeper you might be; but one to plot against a young woman who was your true friend, who believed in you, trusted you, and hoped great things for you—I did not think you would do that."

Profanity was Richard's only resource, and he indulged in that, and vowed vengeance against Mr. Grey, John, and everybody he could think of. Dr. Irving waited until he had finished, and then, laying his hand on his shoulder, said impressively and slowly: "You must come to my house no more. I intend to protect my child, and, no matter what your hell-inspired intentions are, I have no fear. Mr. Grey (whom Satan has undoubtedly in his clutches, too) has told me your plans, but I advise you to beware. Even now God will forgive you if you turn to Him."

"I will drive you all to the devil," cried Richard, wildly, his muddled and passion-heated brain being unable to gather the import of the minister's words.

"Poor boy, you will only injure yourself. God lives, you know."

This was said in the calm, nearly tender voice that Katherine used so frequently, and it sounded so much like hers that it maddened Richard.

"She won my love; she charmed me purposely; she knew I loved her," he cried, wildly, and then, feeling his own helplessness beneath the calm, resolute eyes of the man of God before him, he turned and half staggered down the street toward Eighth Avenue, and the clergyman walked slowly in the other direction.

A Spiritual and Physical Struggle 189

Richard felt as if he were going mad. How nice it would be to kill himself and John and Katherine, he thought; and then other desperate ideas, such as setting fire to a house in order that other brains would rage as his was raging now, seized him. A harmless young man was walking behind him, and, in order that his wild rage might have some outlet, he turned round, seized him, and threw him furiously to the ground. The man roared, "Murder! thieves! help!" and two other men coming in the opposite direction ran and seized Richard, and then a crowd gathered, and a few moments later a policeman arrived. The harmless but now frightened-looking young man made a charge of highway robbery against Richard, and declared that his gold watch had disappeared. And so it had. In the scuffle it had fallen on the sidewalk, and a nimble-fingered gentleman who was one of the early arrivals at the scene had appropriated it, and taken it home to admire it.

"You idiot, I am no sneak thief," cried Richard, when the officer asked him where the watch was.

"No, yer an angel. Come on to the station-house; it's in yer clothes, or y've got an accomplice, that's what," said the preserver of the peace. So Richard went with him, the harmless young man following at a safe distance behind.

CHAPTER XXI

TWO CONFERENCES AND A VISIT FROM "DADDY LONGLEGS"

It is a month later, and the Rev. Dr. Irving and his daughter are seated in the parsonage study talking.

"We must be true, at all hazards, Katherine," her father says, firmly.

"I know, papa," she answers, simply. There are traces of tears in her eyes, but there is no weakness visible there.

"How do you feel in regard to God in this matter, Katherine?"

"Oh, papa dear, that is it—I do not know."

"Why, Katherine dear, surely you know God better than to fear that He will not stand by you."

She answered nothing for a few moments. Her face was buried in her hands, and there was a despairing look on it when her father lifted it up and kissed it.

"Ah, my child," he said, "it is you who have failed God. You have been doubting, have you not?"

"Yes."

"And why, dear?"

"Well, papa, I tried to bring Richard Masterson to Him. It was the Christ-love—the—the—I think the mother-love in me that made my heart long to save him for our Father. I seemed to feel with him and to understand him so well. It was because of that love and trust that I went on that walk with him, and it was through this that Mr. Grey got the opportunity to attack my character. You say he had a camera, and took pictures of Mr. Masterson and myself?"

"Yes, dear, I have seen them, and they apparently substantiate his story."

Katherine's mind reverted to the moment by the roadside when Richard seized her hands and bent over her, saying, "Darling, I would be willing to die for you." She remembered the buggy that drove by, and her heart grew sick within her.

"Tell me all he says about me, papa."

"Well, dear, he said you loved that fellow knowing that he was a married man and that, unless he himself is restored to the church and allowed to go on with his work at the mission, he will give the whole story to the newspapers. Masterson, he says, maintains that you knew he was married all the time."

"Papa, I cannot believe that," said Katherine, with earnest conviction. "Richard Masterson was not a scoundrel of that type. He was impulsive and weak, but surely not a studied rascal."

"If I could only find him," said the minister, sighing. "John has searched everywhere for him, and I have advertised in the newspapers, but it seems as if the very ground swallowed him up that night I left him. The strangest thing is that his saloon is shut up, and his wife and child and partner have all disappeared."

"Where does Mr. Grey say he is?"

"He simply says that he knows," said her father.

Katherine remained silent for a moment, and then said, "Papa, do you wonder that my faith is weak?"

"Yes, dear, I do," he replied. "God will vindicate you if you let Him. You have been true and fearless, but indiscreet, Katherine, and perhaps this very experience will teach you the lesson you need. We wrestle not with flesh and blood alone, when we are in Christian work, but with a cunning, malignant enemy who would throw mud on God's brightest stars. We must avoid even the appearance of evil, just because vileness and treachery are so much a part of the unregenerate mind that it sees its own filth reflected in the gems of earth."

Dr. Irving was angry, as angry as every true man

ought to be when two-footed beasts, with their sense of smell so sulphurized that they find the odor of corruption everywhere, turn their hideous faces toward heaven and defile its holy precincts with their perjured and sickening suspicions.

"Papa, I have been too careless of the fact that where Satan dwells one has to be careful. But to me, lawful things have always been expedient ones, and I never thought anyone would dare to impeach my character."

"They impeached the character of the Lord of Glory, Katherine. But, remember that all things work together—not separately—for good when we love God. And what kind of Christians would we be if God had to send an angel to notify us of every new surprise? My little girl is a soldier, isn't she?"

"Yes, papa, forever more," said Katherine, firmly; and then she added, with the sorrowing conviction that comes to many a true disciple when the low light of dying faith is flickering back again: "Why was I not true to Him? Why did I doubt because the darkness came; oh, papa, how can I make it up to Him?"

"My darling," said her father, softly, "He and I were Friends before you were born, and I have always found that when I wanted to please Him the best thing to do was to believe Him. You can-

not do penance, nor does He want you to place your little mite of suffering in the scale with His blood shed for you. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. God can do nothing with a despondent, unbelieving Christian, but He can work miracles with a humble, simple believer."

"Just take me as I am, Lord; I believe Thee," sobbed Katherine, and her father took her in his arms and held her there for several minutes.

John arrived a few moments later, and he paced up and down the parlor until Katherine came to him. She noticed that his face was white, and there was a determined look around his mouth that she had never seen there before, and as she went up to him she noticed, too, that the sight of her was unable to bring the light to his eyes as it always had.

"Girlie!" he cries, and seizes her hands.

"What is it, John?" she asks, gently.

"Are you sure you want to marry me?"

"I am, my darling; of course, I am."

"You are positive that—Katherine, you are not going to misunderstand me, are you?"

"Of course, I am not."

"You will not think that someone has been trying to influence me, and that I believe this awful story, or that I want to be free, will you?"

She felt as if she would gasp for breath, but a moment later she looked at him and said: "No, John, I know you—you would not insult me, but," and the mouth grew firm and the winning smile only succeeded in breaking, sadly, "my happiness does not depend even upon your actions. I have always wanted to be centred in God; from now on I shall be. Only there, is true rest; and, if our happiness depends on Him, neither place nor circumstances nor position can make any difference."

John looked at her for a moment, and then knelt before her, murmuring, "My queen, my queen, my Katherine."

"Stand up, John," she said, a little crossly. "Sentiment must not overcome your common-sense. Besides, if I am to be your wife, we must stand side by side. You must not put me on a pedestal, because it would be wronging me to expect too much of me."

A little sob unwittingly escaped her, and as she thought of her recent unbelief she looked at John, and, putting her hand on his shoulder, said, "John, I want your prayers as much as your love, and—and, I do want that."

"Then you truly love me, girlie?"

"Why do you question it?"

"I—I—thought that perhaps you loved Master-son, after all."

"He was married."

"Yes, but you did not know it; and, oh, Katherine, darling, you were fond of him, you know."

"Fond is not the word, John, and you may as well understand this affection now. Ever since I played with my dollies in my baby days my heart has felt for and suffered for the weak and the helpless. My dear father used to tell me it was the mother-love, and I believe he was right. I know that the world might not understand it, but you and I are not living for the world; and when God gives us those affections we must recognize them. After I gave myself to Christ this love grew and grew, and I have met my poor little ones, some two years old, some twenty-two, in the cars and streets until I have longed to go to them and tell them that I loved them with Him. I love Alice as I loved our poor brother. I love brave Katie Finnegan and her little girls; and there is not one, poor, wicked, lost and all, as the world calls them, that I do not cherish in my heart."

"But you may be misunderstood, my Katherine."

"Yes, I know, John, and I have been thinking over it. Perhaps I ought to be more careful in the future. I have learned a lesson, John, and one that I am sure I will never forget. I see that while we

walk on this earth we have to recognize the claims of conventionality, even though they are the claims of prudish hypocrites who love scandal and the breath of sin, for the same reason that the pig loves the mire he wallows in. However, I believe it to be true that personal affection often dresses itself up in the garb of the seeker for God. I do not want to pluck up the wheat with the tares, but," with a sad smile, "whenever I suspect the weed's presence in future I will cultivate it in the presence of many witnesses."

John laughed heartily, but grew presently sober and said: "I think you are right, dear, especially if it is a masculine weed. I think that, except in unusual cases, men had better work with men and women with women."

"Yes, because sin is so vile that it suspects everyone else. Oh, John, no wonder it killed our Christ!"

"My noble Katherine," said John, and as she twined her arms about his neck they both knew that the shadow had fled forever.

"Why do you love me, Katherine?" he asked, after a few moments, with all the unreasonableness of a happy lover.

"Oh, not because I cannot help it," she said, smiling. "I am not quite so weak as that;" and then,

more gravely, "I love you for your worth, John. I have known you since your boyhood, when you were a little Irish emigrant; and I remember well the time your father died, leaving you alone in a strange land. You were then——"

"Sixteen," said John, thoughtfully.

"Yes, and I remember the day you came to my father and asked him to find you a position doing anything. You had no false pride, John."

"Why should I? My father was only a poor drug-clerk, darling."

"And you went to work in a foundry—poor John."

"It was the making of me, Katherine."

"And you borrowed books from everybody and studied every spare moment, and you saved one hundred dollars and put it into a bank that failed; and then you had an attack of sickness, but you clung to God and preached a happy gospel by the way, and never grew sad or cynical. Your right hand does not know the hundreds your left hand has helped, John, but your Katherine does."

"A Christian should be an altruist and a brother of men, sweetheart."

"And then," continued Katherine, musingly, "when God had tried and proved you, your success commenced, and John Pierce, the inventor, is the

result. My brave John! Do you think I do not know that temptations beset you? Do you think I do not know what your struggles were before you won your battle? Ah, yes, I knew to whom I gave my heart."

As Katherine concluded she looked at John, with pride beaming in her eyes, and, just as he was going to grow foolish in the recognized and traditional way of all lovers, Mrs. Gleason announced a messenger from Mrs. de Rutyer. The messenger was a woman, cross-eyed and tall, with a large oval forehead that made her look as if she was bald-headed. Her skirts were short, and her long, thin legs and big feet, together with the look in her eyes, gave her a rather uncouth appearance.

"Have you experienced religion?" she said to Katherine, looking at her, but because of the strangeness of her visual organs apparently staring John out of countenance.

Katherine knew that this was one of Mrs. de Rutyer's former pensioners, and maliciously concluded that John would be better able to take her in hand, so she said, "Ask Mr. Pierce."

The visitor now stared at John, but looked as if Katherine was the one person whose soul she wanted to read; and, after a few moments of close scrutiny, during which her distorted stares first

frightened one and then the other, she said, "And, sir, who are you that you should be my sister's keeper?"

"Bless you, I have not got your sister; you may search me," said John, looking very innocent, and turning his pockets inside out.

"Has she experienced religion, and what have you to do with it?" the lady of the attenuated garments said, preserving a serenity of countenance that would have put the pyramids to shame.

"She has had many funny experiences," said John, "but her heart has been weakened lately," this with a sly glance at Katherine, "and we think it is better she should not have so much entertainment."

"Funny! entertainment!" screamed the visitor, jumping up and down and shaking a heavy Bible at him.

"Please stop," said John. "If you make her laugh I will have to throw water on her."

"I have written a poem," said the visitor, impressively, "on the death of a certain Polly——"

"The Polly who wanted the cracker?" interrupted John.

"One whom I knew," continued the visitor, without deigning to notice the interruption. "She went to hell."

"Oh! ah! my!" this from John; and then:
"Did you know, madam, that pronouncing that last word is a proof of one's orthodoxy nowadays?"

"I am going to read you a part of my poem, sir."

"Is it funny?"

"Funny?"

"Yes, because if it is I must get some water. Mrs. Gleason, please bring me a few quarts of water."

Mrs. Gleason, who was standing by, grinned broadly and brought the water, and John said, with the air of a desperate man, "Now, madam, proceed."

"Beware of the flesh, young man."

"I will remember that," said John, and to Mrs. Gleason's delight and Katherine's great danger, for she was now on the point of choking with suppressed laughter, the visitor read a poem on the infernal regions, which she did not need to assure her hearers was original in conception and treatment. At the close of each verse she repeated the chorus:

"Oh, 'tis awful, awful, awful!
Oh, 'tis awful to go there,"

and as she went on she would raise first one foot and then the other, stamping vehemently all the time. It was clear that "Daddy" never read

Dante, and equally clear that she had founded a new school of thought on the question of future punishments and rewards, but, somehow or other, the looked-for converts were slow in appreciating it. When she ceased reading Katherine screamed with laughter, and John raised his water-pitcher, but stumbled in getting up, so that a great part of the contents fell over their visitor, who screamed, "Oh, 'tis awful"; for, in her excitement, she was still in the midst of her poem dilating on Polly's woes.

"I knew there would be trouble if you read that funny thing," said John, looking aggrieved.

"You are a wicked man," said the visitor, "and now I remember that you are the same fleshly, carnal son of the Prince of the Powers of the air who interrupted Mrs. de Rutyer's meeting at the mission some time ago."

"Yes, I remember you; you are a young sales-lady," said John, mischievously.

"I am not, sir; I pray for my living. A voice comes to me in my sleep and tells me to pack my effects and leave, telling me what brother's or sister's house to go to, so I go at once; and, as the voice sends me, I have a right to stay there as long as I want to."

"Lie down on the couch and have a sleep," said John, "and I will help you to be obedient when you get your message."

Two Conferences and a Visit 203

The woman looked at him, rolled her eyes, and then opened her Bible, but Katherine had too much respect for the Word of God to see it wrested to fit the fanatical crook of the visitor's insane dogma, so she said, quietly, "Kindly give me your message."

"Mrs. de Rutyer and Miss Cathiy Finiganni wish to see you."

"Miss who?" exclaimed Katherine.

"The child of the slums who was formerly known as Katie Finnegan, but as Saul became Paul when he became converted, so I have called this child of wretchedness Cathiy Finiganni."

"My dear Katie is not a child of wretchedness," said Katherine, indignantly, "and her name is just plain Katie Finnegan, and it is a name that is going to tell for God, too. Please do not attempt to put any of your nonsensical ideas into the child's head, and I beg of you," smiling sweetly even at this strange specimen of a believer, "not to let the devil turn you aside from the plain common-sense way of God. The leadings of God must not be turned into the advice of a fortune-teller, and when God gives us health and opportunities we must not think that we can prey—I spell it with an *e*—on our neighbors instead of laboring for ourselves."

"I had hoped Cathiy might be helped by you, but

I see that she cannot. *This* is the result of your teaching."

"This" was a letter, and the visitor stalked out as John commenced to read it. It ran:

"DEAR DADDY LONGLEGS: If you call me Cathiy agin I'll be tempted to forget I'm saved, an I'll be apt to punch yer complexun. Now look here, if y'ure desent I'll stan' wid ye. De boss wants a laundress, so if ye want to work fer a livin' come roun' an I'll say a good word fer yez, an if yez is too lazy to wash I'll send de dog catcher after yez an put yez in de poor-house. Don't be disgracin' de Lord w'en yer servin' old Nick. God takes de lazy out of old sinful bones, so be honest an' admit dat yer present side of de house is de devil's side.

"KATIE FINNEGAN."

"John, come into the library; I want you," said Dr. Irving, appearing in the doorway with a troubled look on his face that the smiles of the other two could not take away.

"And I will run around to Mrs. de Ruttyer's," said Katherine, and after she had pressed John's hand she turned to her father and said, "Papa dear, cling closer to our Christ," but her own heart felt strangely heavy when the street-door shut behind her.

CHAPTER XXII

KATHERINE REPLIES TO A RASCAL AND VENTURES AN OPINION ON SOCIALISTIC DOCTRINES

FROM the parsonage, which was on West Forty-eighth Street, Katherine walked briskly toward the 'de Rutyer mansion. But she had not gone far when she noticed that someone was walking close behind her, and, turning around, she saw the Christian Merchant, who leered at her in a triumphant and positively demoniac way.

"Well, have you come to terms, sister?"

"What are your terms?" asked Katherine, quietly.

"Just this: that if you and your father say nothing I will repent and return to the mission field, and will give money to your work, besides throwing away the proofs of your fall from grace."

This was said half mockingly, half sadly, and Katherine smiled as he concluded.

"Mr. Grey," she said, "you know as well as I do that I sought to save Mr. Masterson, and that I was entirely ignorant of the things I have since

learned about him. The proofs you speak of are only a further proof of how fully Satan possesses you. You know that 'the wages of sin is death'; and, as one who is interested in your eternal welfare, I ask you to flee to the cross of Christ for forgiveness. I have nothing to fear from you, for God is my refuge."

"Don't you know that there are many in the church and outside of it who will believe what I tell them?" asked the Christian Merchant.

"Perhaps, but that has no influence with me."

"It will drive you out of Christian work."

"I am not in it for myself; if God is done with me I am quite willing to give it up."

"You might have saved yourself, had you not intended to expose me."

"I never intended to expose you publicly," said Katherine, "but I had determined that you were to remain out of the work. That in itself would have told those who ought to know, that something was wrong, but would not tell what. As for your money, not one dollar of it is to enter our treasury, for we have our grave doubts of its honest stamp!"

"You will sing another tune next week, sister," said the Christian Merchant, bitterly, as Katherine left him and crossed the street.

All the way to Mrs. de Rutyer's she prayed; for

this cross that had come to her burned her soul, and she did not even dare to look at it or to estimate its weight. If the story got into the newspapers she felt she could not live through it—and then the shame of it all! and the doubts it might raise in the minds of many who were looking to her as a servant of Jesus Christ. But no thought of compromise ever entered her heart, and as she rang the bell of the house to which she was going, a prayer that spoke the cry of her heart ascended to heaven. It was, “Only let me be true, Lord.”

In Mrs. de Rutyer’s morning-room were the lady of the house, her husband, and Katie.

“Oh, Miss Irving, I’m going to get de kids out o’ de home,” cried Katie, joyfully.

“Katie, Katie dear!” remonstrated Mrs. de Rutyer.

“Oh, well, I mean I’m goin’ to get de—me—my brudders an’ sisters out o’ de home,” corrected Katie, “an’ Mrs. de Rutyer’s goin’ to send dem to loin at a swell school where dey’ll loin how to do de grand.”

“Now, Katie, put that sentence [a hiss] in good English.”

“De deah littal ones are goin’ to a boarding-school,” said Katie, hissing out the words with an accent that rivalled Mrs. de Rutyer’s own, “an’ I’m goin’ to have a celluloid infloence over dem.”

"Sanctified, Katie!"

"Oh, yes," said Katie, blushing; "an' we feel suah dere will be terrible results."

"Tangible, Katie," said Mrs. de Rutyer, smiling, while her husband's portly frame shook.

After Katherine had joined in the laugh, Mrs. de Rutyer said: "Katherine dear, my husband wants to send Katie to school, too, but she does not care to go because she wants to keep up her work in the Finnegan Association, and I want to know what you advise about it."

"Could Katie not go to the public school, and go to the club in the evenings?" asked Katherine.

"Now, dat's what I say," said Katie, beaming at her friend. "Lizzie Kelly comes up to-day an' she sez, 'Katie,' sez she, 'stick to de gang.' 'Ye bet I will,' sez I. 'Pray for de gang, Katie,' sez she; 'lots o' dem hain't got no dinners, an' dey gets too tired and flabbergasted to pray for deyselves. Dey t'inks yer high-toned 'cause yer wid swells.' 'Not much,' sez I, 'an' I'm goin' to pay back every cent Mrs. de Rutyer spends on me, an' she's all right, too, at dat,'" this with a sweet smile at her guardian. "Now, if I gev de club de go-by, dey'd say I got all de soup I wanted an' den fergot me friends—not much!"

There was a great deal of decision in the "not

much," and Katherine said, " I think you are right, Katie."

" I want Mrs. de Rutyer to hire a decent room for us," said Katie. " 'Tis fer Jesus, so I'm not 'shamed at askin' fer it ; an,' somehow, I'm sure we'll be able ter do something wid de club."

" And I will do it, Katie," said Mrs. de Rutyer. " Katherine, what do you suggest? "

" I would suggest the renting of a flat in the neighborhood, to be in charge of a few paid resident workers, if two could not be found wealthy and self-sacrificing enough to give their time to it. These women would visit in the neighborhood, and live among the people in a spirit of sisterly helpfulness. They would hold simple gospel services, and perhaps have industrial classes, and, of course, welcome the club members, who ought to own one of the rooms at least."

" Good ! Good ! " said Katie, and then she added, " an' I would pick out some o' de girls to go to de different houses, an' show *d'old* dames how to house-clean, an' maybe I'd loin to cook an' teach 'em. Say, half o' de kids die o' bad food and dirt."

Katherine suddenly thought of Alice's ambitious dreams, and she stroked Katie's head in silence.

" Have you been to Sing Sing prison yet, Miss Irving? " asked Mr. de Rutyer, suddenly.

"Oh, yes, three times. I held one public meeting, and had many interviews with friends of our poor boy. They all knew and liked him, and many tears were shed over his sad death. I expect to go again in a few weeks, for I hope to bring God many pearls out of that dark place."

"I believe you are something of a socialist or single-tax advocate," said Mr. de Rutyer, smiling.

"Why?"

"Oh, because of your harangue on the right to the use of the earth, the night that poor fellow's body lay there. I was, I confess, a little mean about it."

"No, I am neither," said Katherine, slowly, "though, as Sir Roger said, I believe there is much to be said on both sides. The right to the use of the earth is plain enough, but, since the law makes private use of land legal, I do not see how it can decide now that it is robbery, or how it can put an end to the system without making some recompense to land-owners. You can never make a thing right by doing wrong."

"The slaveholders of the South were not recompensed when the blacks were freed," said Mr. de Rutyer.

"That was a question of North and South; this land question is a universal one, Mr. de Rutyer;

and so closely are the interests of the people connected with it that you will find very few ready to shoulder a musket for it. The one was a direct traffic in flesh and blood. This would be termed only an indirect one by even the most radical. As long as there will be individual effort and genius there will be individual enterprise, and, after all, should we sacrifice the individual for the whole?"

"Do you think, then, that I have a right to own land while others starve?"

"Supposing that I do not?"

"Well, I would maintain that I have."

"Exactly," said Katherine. "Mr. de Rutyer, the Spirit of God must take the selfish interests out of the hearts of men before the golden age becomes a reality."

"But, you know," he said, smiling, "that the apostles of the single-tax claim that it is poverty that creates vice; and that the poor man would be as polite as the rich man if there was enough on his table. He scrambles for food, they say, only when he has not enough."

"Partly true, but not all the truth," said Katherine. "There are greater vices than bad manners, and I assure you the rich have their share of them. If poverty and sin are twin-brothers, how do we account for the more refined, but much more hide-

ous sins of the purple-wearers? It is true that poverty sometimes makes the drunkard ; but it is much more often true that drunkards make poverty."

" You do not think, then, that socialism and state ownership of land would solve the problem of the unemployed, Miss Irving? "

" No, indeed, because we have a wrong idea of greatness ; and, with the incentive to private enterprise gone, I believe the state would become the custodian of more lazy ones than any other kind. Ah, Mr. de Rutyer, I would be glad if I could see any measure that would set our crooked social system right ; but, when I know that every wrong commenced right in the heart of man, and that it is the transgressing of the laws of God that have flooded us with the social problems that are social curses, I know that every reform must begin from within, and not from without. Government ownership would not insure us honest ownership nor honest officials, any more than hundreds of statute books and millions of police prevent crime. The failure of many of our prohibitory liquor laws, and the clever and unblushing way public men help law-breakers to strain fine points and get around the legal difficulties, show us that law does not always succeed."

" It will take a long time to convert the world," said Mr. de Rutyer.

"No longer than to convince the world that its own interests should be secondary," said Katherine, "and not nearly so long as that, if the church was true to its mission ; because the Christ in men makes hard things easy. If in God we live and move and have our being, any honest science will tell us that no patching from outside will help our difficulties, but that we must get back to our centre. God is my remedy for all the ills that flesh has made itself an heir to, and those Christian men or women do not deserve the name who will not gladly account themselves stewards of Christ and use their wealth in His service. When He comes, the social problems will be solved. We can solve many of them now with prayer."

"That is an easy way, Miss Irving."

"On the contrary, thousands of men would rather agitate and storm and fight whirlwinds with their little straws than to let Christ lead them into all truth and righteousness and wisdom ; and they would rather create a revolution than a prayer. It is all so simple that they are ashamed to part with their intellectual doctrines for it. Ah, Mr. de Ruyter, when we know that the great laws of prayer are as fixed as those of gravitation, and as certain of results, this world will be nearer the dawn of its millennial morning."

"I want to help, Miss Irving," said Mr. de Rutyer, in a low voice, "for I think that your theories are right. After all, no social reformer need cease his efforts if he becomes a Christian missionary, for, as you say, one can approach an unselfish, righteous man with truth when the self-centred one would refuse to listen."

"Yes, that is it," said Katherine, earnestly. "I would impress on Christian men, above all other things, the power of the ballot. They should vote and uphold moral earnestness and moral issues always; otherwise, of course, the world, the flesh, and the devil will carry the election. The Christian who is untrue to this duty is untrue to God."

"Do you wish you had the right to vote?"

"Decidedly, I do," said Katherine, "and when I get that right I will exercise it; but my life-long mission will be leading the blinded wanderers to the light."

Mrs. de Rutyer smiled sweetly and sympathetically at Katherine, and again the discussion turned upon Chinatown, and Katie suggested a prayer for the success of their project. After the prayer, Mr. de Rutyer brought out his check-book and wrote four figures upon it, and Katherine went home stronger in faith and more determined to carry the banner of the cross than she had ever been before.

CHAPTER XXIII

BROUGHT TO BAY

LATE as it was when Katherine returned, she found her father and John still engaged in earnest conversation; and when she looked at them, and succeeded in forcing a little tired smile to her face, she saw that something had happened that had deeply touched the souls of both. She sat down near them after removing her cloak, and told them about her meeting with Mr. Grey, and his threats.

"Yes, I saw him to-day, Katherine," said her father. "I have been telling John about it. He warned me that, if he were not back in the work by next Saturday night, he would expose what the ruffian calls your fall from grace, next Sunday."

"If only you will let me deal with him, Doctor," said John, fiercely.

"John, John, dear," said Katherine, stroking his hand; and then, turning to her father, she said, "Papa, has John told you about—about *us*?"

"Yes," said the clergyman, his brow clearing a little. "Why did *you* not?"

"Because," and a mischievous look took possession of her face, "*I* proposed to him, and I thought he might at least ask for your blessing."

"Katherine, I have been asking you to marry me for several years," said John, with mock indignation.

"And only when you stopped did I agree," said Katherine. "Papa, is not that the way of all women?"

"Perhaps, dear," said her father, affectionately. "You could not have pleased me more than you have. I frankly confess that I did not expect you to make such a sensible choice."

"Of course," said Katherine, a little indignantly. "You think I have neither sense nor poise, and am all emotion and sentiment, because I laugh between 'Amens,' and refuse to let religion make me solemn. However," mischievously, "I do not know that I have shown such good sense, after all."

"I am only getting to know you lately, Katherine," said her father, gravely. "It seems hard to lose you now."

"Lose me! Do you think John would ask me to leave you? No, indeed; I am sure he has made up his mind that we are to live with you here in the parsonage."

Now, John had done no such thing, but Katherine had determined to rule her husband with love,

and to let him think his was the master hand; so she smiled sweetly at him, her golden-brown eyes telling their own soft story, and he brushed her rich, brown tresses with his hand and said: "My queen shall always decide such matters for me. You know, my dear pastor," turning to her father, "how I have always loved you. I will be happy to have you with us. We will all grow old together."

"We are not likely to quarrel, my boy," said Dr. Irving, smiling. "But let us return to our former subject. What are we to do about Mr. Grey?"

Katherine leaned back in her chair and gazed meditatively up at the ceiling. As her thoughts took form and shape she frowned, and the frown was followed by a look of pain; and, again, by one of sorrow and perplexity; but no look of fear was there. Gradually a firm, set expression cornered her mouth, and she sat up in her chair and, looking at her father, said, "Papa, is not next Lord's day communion Sunday?"

"Yes, my child."

"No one but the members of the church and other Christians will be there at the Lord's Supper," she said, meditatively, and then, as if this decided her, she said, "that is the best time."

"For what, Katherine?"

"For the truth, papa. After the communion

service I intend to stand on the platform and tell the people the entire story. Let them judge then, and let God decide."

"Katherine!" cried John and her father, in amazement.

"Yes, that is what I will do," she answered, calmly. "Truth needs no shield, nor has it any right to shelter itself behind diplomacy."

"But, Katherine," said John, "that is inviting a scandal. Mr. Grey may repent, and time works wonders."

"Diseases grow worse with time, John," she replied, "and I believe the knife ought to be used in desperate cases. If my life among our people is not a testimony in my behalf, it is better I should know it. When I tell them, they will not believe this vile thing against me."

"The world believed ill of Christ, Katherine."

"But He faced it bravely, and so will I," said the little heroine, undaunted.

"Suppose I forbid, Katherine?" said her father, looking fixedly at her, his deep, black eyes growing cold and stern.

"You will not, papa, dear," she replied, taking his hand, a tender, pleading light filling her smiling eyes with an added witchery. "You know it is for the truth's sake. I am going to pray about it, and,"

with a triumphant ring in her musical voice, "I believe in the God I pray to."

Her father turned his face away, and John reasoned and pleaded caution and prudence, but she was inexorable, and both men realized for the first time in their lives that this little woman they both loved had a metal in her composition they had never heard ring before. It seemed as if the voice of prophecy spoke within the minister's soul as he went to bed that night.

"My little girl's heart is a great one, and so it will have to suffer," he said, sadly. "It is a brave one, and so will have to fight; it is a tender one, and so will need to sorrow; it is uncurbed, and it will be reined in in a hard school, but it will win many souls and many battles, and defeat will only make it more beautiful."

It is Sunday morning, a bright August morning, and the Reverend Doctor Irving's church is full, as it always is on the Sabbath day. It is a wide building, built like a theatre, with little regard for the beautiful in its interior decoration, for the preacher has ideas of his own about how money should be spent. He does not think it ought to go for stained windows or velvet-cushioned pews, especially when it is so scarce. He has old-fashioned views about things, and thinks that a church should be hallowed

only by the presence of God ; and be only a place wherein He is worshipped, and where the soul comes into touch with Him. He tells his people about the New Jerusalem, where there shall be neither sun nor moon, " for the Lamb is the light thereof," and he tries to pattern his church after that. A little organ is on the platform, at which Katherine sits Sunday after Sunday. She leads the choir, her voice being the only trained one ; and as she sits there this morning and looks at her singers, as she calls the young men and women sitting on the platform on the extreme left, and then at her father as he bends over the plain pulpit just large enough to hold his Bible and hymnal, she feels that there is no church in the world half so beautiful.

Over the platform are several scriptural banners, the most prominent being " They were all of one heart to make Jesus King." The seats (for they are not pews) are clearly utilitarian, and no unnecessary softness lingers around them ; but they are free, and the stranger has only to enter and choose whichever he pleases. And what a congregation it is ! Men and women who were formerly Hebrews, Sceptics, Roman Catholics, and spiritually dead Protestants who had nothing of the Reformation left except the self-appointed right to protest. Back on those seats are sitting men and women whose

lives were dedicated to sin and impurity, and who come now to sing God's praises, and to pray for a grander purity than they have ever known. Deep thinkers and quiet scholars, who have found in God what they failed to find in science, sit side by side with the wash-woman who cries "Hallelujah" every few moments, and with the poor working-man who comes here because he understands the simple, eloquent words of the preacher. And how the preacher talks to-day! How his words burn into the souls of his hearers! They lean forward on their seats to catch every inflection of his deep voice, and to catch the glow in his black eyes and the vigorous Christian manhood that his well-knitted figure and powerful arms reveal as he walks to and fro. He is quiet, calm, and argumentative one moment, and the next instant the building is filled with the sound of the impassioned words he utters, and his hands, and the very movements of his head, are so eloquent and so descriptive of his theme that listeners follow him as few preachers ever get their congregation to listen.

It is Communion Sunday, and the sermon is shorter than usual. Mr. Grey receives the Lord's Supper with the others. He is sitting facing the pulpit, and there is a defiant look in his eyes when they meet the preacher's kind ones that say nothing at all except a little reproach.

The Lord's Supper at the Church of the Good Tidings is always a solemn event, and to-day there seems to be more of a hush than ever as the bread divine is passed around. When it is over, the minister stands before his people for a moment, and they, awaiting the usual benediction, are surprised to note that there is a little tremor in his voice as he makes the unusual announcement that Miss Irving had something to say.

"You are all Christians, of course," he says, with the same tremor. "Only Christians remain to the Lord's Supper. However, should anyone who is not a believer have remained as a witness of the holy ceremony, I ask him to please withdraw, as this talk is only to Christians who are either members of the church or are affiliated with us as members of the mystical body of Christ." But no one leaves, and he nods quietly to Katherine and smiles at John, who is sitting a few seats behind the Christian Merchant.

As Katherine walks to the pulpit, her queenly little head held aloft and her brown eyes full of light and determination, he feels she has taken the right course. He has been praying about it, and, much as he dislikes the whole thing and greatly as he fears that believers will be found for the horrible story, he admires his daughter as she looks down

and into the eyes of the people, and wins them with the very sweetness of her glance. They all know her and love her. She knows they do, and she loves them; but she knows, too, that she has some power that has been rapidly developed in her soul ever since her conversion, that wins the sympathy of people for her without any attempt on her part to have it do so. But she is humble for all that, and yet she knows how to use her gift in a good cause. She has never prostituted it, and has never attempted to win a heart for herself; it has always been that it might be led to God. She looks at Mr. Grey, who is smiling quizzically and yet a little wonderingly, and then she turns slowly from him to the people, and her clear, bell-like voice falls on their ears.

“My dear friends, my brothers and sisters,” she says, leaning over the pulpit and talking down to them in a quiet conversational way, “it is an unpleasant thing for me to come to you to accuse one who was with us in the fold of Christ, and who is trying to wound and hurt and wrong me because I snatched from him one of our weak little sisters whom he was trying to drive to perdition. You who know me, I think, know that I believe in forgiveness, in love and in forbearance, but that I believe, too, that hypocrisy must not be fitted by religion with a cloak

and allowed to defile the temple of God. Our Christ never spoke harshly except to the self-righteous hypocrite, and, if He drove the money-changers out of the temple, what are we to do to the man who traffics in souls and shields himself behind the sacrifice of the cross? I am sorry, oh, so sorry, to have to talk to you on this topic, but as I believe that God stands by the truth, and that its voice is its own defence, I will tell you the whole sad story, reminding you, however, that we are to be kind."

Katherine's voice had changed its ring so many times as she went on, and the light in her face had risen and set and hovered around her pleading eyes in so many ways, that her listeners could not keep their wondering, horrified eyes off her face. Not so, Mr. Grey. He was taken by surprise, and was thoroughly frightened. All the color seemed to have left his face, and he sat with a perfectly helpless look, his chin resting on his breast as if no life was left in him. What would he do? What would he say? She was going to accuse him, and everyone who looked at him would know he was guilty. Shame! shame! and they had known him for so many years. He had prayed with them, counselled them, warned them, and been looked upon as a man of God. There was her voice again. Oh, would she ever stop? She was looking at him

and telling of the letter Mrs. de Rutyer received from Alice. Now she is describing how she followed the hypocrite, how he pleaded for mercy, and then became threatening when he saw that he would not be allowed to wear his cloak any longer.

"Not that I would have given his name or told his sin to anybody," said Katherine. "I only wished him to leave our work."

She continues her description, and Mr. Grey feels that her eyes are upon him, and that he can contain himself no longer. Something must be done. He feels that his knees are shaking, and that he is powerless to move hand or foot, but by a great effort he raises himself to his feet, and by a greater effort he speaks. His voice is husky and scarcely audible, and he moistens his lips with his tongue several times as he proceeds.

"Say no more, Miss Irving," he says, pleadingly, "let the sinner be still nameless. I know him, and he has confessed his sin, and will call on you this evening and ask for your forgiveness on his knees."

"Are you sure of that, Mr. Grey?" Katherine says, kindly.

"Yes, I am positive," he replies, in a low voice, and the people think that good Brother Grey is weeping over the sinner.

Katherine hesitates. It is not an honest confes-

sion ; it is not even repentance ; it is the fear of being found out, and yet she does not want to punish him, so she says, " Very well, let it be so " ; and then, turning to the people, she says, " I thank you for your sympathetic attention, and now I ask your prayers that our brother's repentance be a sincere one, and that God's forgiveness may rest upon him to-day. He is our brother, you know, isn't he ? "

She smiles sweetly, but there is no affirmative answer in the faces she looks at, and she quotes, " While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. " She pauses for about two minutes, during which she looks with her soft, strange, winning look into every face present, and then she says with her very soul in her voice, " God bless you, my dear friends. "

" Let that be our closing benediction, " says her father, quietly, and the people leave their seats and file out into the street, indignant, sad, and perplexed, but more in love with their organist than ever. Organist, forsooth ! She was the real shepherd of the sheep, and her father knew after that scene that she was. He might stir them with his voice, but she melted their hearts with her look.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MIRTH AND MADNESS

THERE is a ring at the bell, and Katherine starts a little uneasily. For some reason she is strangely nervous. She has been thinking of Richard a great deal, and a little of Mr. Grey, for whom she tried hard to pray several times, and failed. There was a strong feeling in her heart that he had taken the only opportunity possible to get himself out of a hard place, but that his penitence amounted to nothing, and a great sigh of relief went up from her heart when Katie Finnegan, and not the one she was expecting, entered the parlor. Katie had grown used to taking baths, and, in fact, had become quite fond of them, and there was a bright flush on her healthy, happy face, and a twinkle in her gray eyes that hid the ugly squint entirely. She had a neat hat that sat jauntily on her thick, black hair, and a pretty blue dress and jacket so completely transformed the president of the Finnegan Association that the only way Katherine could express her surprise was to kiss her and say, "What a handsome girl my Katie is getting to be sure."

Katie blushed a rich red, and twined her arms in baby fashion about Katherine's neck. Then she looked with her own gray into the soft, brown eyes bending above her, and her lips trembled a little and her eyes drooped in a shamefaced way as she said, " Kiss me, Miss Irving."

It was the first expression of sentiment Katherine had ever seen in Katie, and she was as surprised as if she had had a proposal of marriage. But she complied with the grace she was such a past mistress of, and a light that was worshipful shone in the eyes of the little redeemed Philistine. For a moment Katie was tempted to fall on her knees and lay the promise of a life-long devotion at the feet of her patron saint, for all the Irish warmth and loyalty in her was stirred, but a something in her soul, that was a fine strength Katie Finnegan had never suspected she possessed, told her not to do it, for it would be weak and emotional, and so she sat beside her idol instead.

" I brought me family home to-day, I did, Miss Irving."

" Oh, I am glad," said Katherine. " Tell me about it, dear."

" Well, you know, Mrs. de Ruttyer paid de bills, found dem board, and did de t'ing handsome."

" She is good to you, isn't she, Katie? "

"Good! you bet she is; but, do ye know, Miss Irving, I like you a hundred times better. 'Tain't right, I don't believe; for she deserves me to kiss de ground she walks on, but it's your ground I'm lovin' all de day."

"Mrs. de Rutyer would not want to take any of that joy away from me, dear," said Katherine, caressing the black head so near her. "You are true to her and you love her, too. Now, tell me about the little ones."

"Tell you? I can't, but come an' have dinner wid us—say, Miss Irving, will ye?" There was a bright, pleading light in Katie's eyes that Katherine could not resist. With the subtle intuition she was possessed of, she knew Katie would be wounded if she refused, and yet she was expecting Mr. Grey, and certainly John ought to be here now. John is here. He rushes in, his face full of a glad greeting, and Katherine asks her hostess to include him in the invitation. Then she leaves a note for Mr. Grey saying she will return in an hour, and the three go out into the street.

"The restaurant ain't far from here," explained Katie. "Mrs. de Rutyer was goin' to give us a spread at de house, but de kids wouldn't enjoy it half as much. My stars, but 'twill be like old times! Ye know, we used all save up our nickels w'en we

lived wid me aunt, an' bolt to dis place on Sunday, an' have a good time—my! but dis is good."

"God is good, isn't He, Katie," said Katherine, squeezing her friend's hand.

"Don't talk about *Him*; I can't stand it, Miss."

There was not much in this statement, but Katherine and John understood the love in that simple heart for her Saviour, and they said nothing.

"Oh, dem orphinages breaks me all up," said Katie. "To see dat great, big, lonesome room, an' de poor kids troopin' in an' hugged by mudders in black an' lonesome-lookin' faders, an' de tears fallin' an' sobs chokin' 'em up, an' dey all beggin' to go home. Some o' dems got used ter it, an' dey just say nawthin' an' chaw apples de visitors bring 'em, an' answers ques'ns when dey're put ter 'em. Deyre was wan woman came dere to-day in black. She was young, 'bout t'irty, I guess, an' she asked for her little boy, Jimmy. W'en de kid came out she ran to de door and caught him up and pulled her shawl round him, an' dey both cried togedder an' kissed each odder, an' talked so old-fashioned like 'bout de times w'en dey'd be togedder again. But dey never will. She got old 'con' sure (I mean consumption), for she coughed de whole time—oh, here's de place. Jumbo! dey're's de kids inside!"

Katherine and John looked, and, through the win-

dow of the little Seventh Avenue lunch-room, they could see a boy and two girls sitting on stools ranged around a long counter, inside which several waitresses were busy. Fruit, pie, and puddings were ranged around, and these the youngsters were discussing earnestly, but when they saw Katie they set up a howl of welcome that disturbed everybody except that well-balanced little dame.

"Devil on toast," cried the waitress.

"What?" exclaimed Katherine.

"Oh, dat means devilled ham on toast," explained Katie.

Just then a bald-headed old man whispered his order, and the same waitress announced it as "scramble with a hot griddle." This did not mean that the old gentleman was going to go through any extraordinary gyrations, but that scrambled eggs and hot griddle-cakes were needed.

"What's yer order?" asked the waitress, coming up to John, but he looked helpless, and Katie said, nonchalantly: "Bring two clubs for dis lady an' gent, four minutes for Petie, an' Philadelphia for Nora, Mary, an' me. Bring Vienna on a side dish, an' wet all round."

The waitress repeated the order to the man behind the scenes, and it was translated on dishes in a few moments as club sandwiches, eggs boiled four

minutes, Philadelphia chicken, Vienna rolls, and coffee. The children ate with gusto, and pinched each other in the legs for amusement. They screamed in unison at John's funny stories, and poked fun at the waitress's false hair, and only winked at her when she glared at them. But it was a happy party, and Katherine and John felt as if they had never enjoyed such a Sunday dinner. Katherine had to kiss all the little Finnegans and gladly kissed Katie twice, and then she and John made their way back to the parsonage, where Mr. Grey was awaiting them.

"I want to see you alone, Miss Irving," he says, passing his hand wearily across his head, and brave little Katherine says, "Of course." John hesitates for a moment, but she asks him, with her quiet, assuring smile, to step into the library for a few moments. As he reaches the door she says, turning to Mr. Grey, "I am engaged to Mr. Pierce, you know."

"Oh, I did not know," said Mr. Grey, looking surprised. "Perhaps he had better remain, after all."

"As you please; I would be glad to have him do so," says Katherine, and Mr. Grey understands then that Katherine cannot be frightened in this way, so he turns away, and John goes out.

Katherine waits for her visitor to speak, but he

stares moodily at the wall for several minutes and then he says: "Very tragic, wasn't it? What an excellent actress you would make, Miss Irving."

Katherine stands up and faces him and says, very quietly, "I am ready to pray with you and to help you; only in doing one or the other will I exchange a word with you."

"You tried to ruin me to-day," he said, as if talking to himself; and then he added, abruptly, "Would you like to know where Richard Masterson is?"

No reply comes from Katherine, and he continues, "I know where he is, and be assured that he will be here at the right time, and you will be shown in your real light." Katherine turns to leave the room, and a mad light leaps into the eyes of the Christian Merchant. He seizes her by the arm and she screams, and when John rushes into the room they are struggling. He sees a bottle in Mr. Grey's hand and he knows it is acid, and realizes the fearful danger his beloved one is in. Quick as a flash he fled across the room, and seized the madman's hand just as he raised the bottle. But he was not quite in time, as Katherine's scream told him, and, when he had beaten the frenzied man into submission, he saw that she had fainted for the first time in her life, and that all one side of her beautiful

face was burned and disfigured. Then the brute rose within John, and he felt as if he could have torn to pieces the wretched man panting and moaning in the chair.

"My darling! my angel girl! my peerless woman of women!" he said, stooping down and taking her into his arms, and just then Dr. Irving came in from the street and into the room. He stood at the door, transfixed there like the slow-blooded, well-controlled man that he was; he set his teeth together, and, going up to Mr. Grey, said, "Have you harmed her?"

Mr. Grey sobbed and clung to him as a frightened child would, and John, looking at the two, said, "Bring Mrs. Gleason here, and send some one for the doctor."

The minister obeyed, but he was trembling in every limb, and, when Mrs. Gleason sobbed her soft Irish lamentations over his darling, he looked on almost as stupidly as Mr. Grey did. But he did not feel stupid. He was only wondering whether she was living or dead, and what he ought to do to her murderer. John bore Katherine to the window, and Mrs. Gleason applied some restoratives, and the minister remained with his hand grasping Mr. Grey's shoulder. And then across his soul there flashed a message from God that said, "Vengeance

is mine, I will repay"; and, after that, something said to him: "It is to save such as he that Christ died. If God gave His own Son, will you not give your child in His service? Now is the time to prove if you believe what you preach."

"I do, my heavenly Father," he said, going over to where Katherine was. "I give her to you if I need to prove it, but would God I had died for her."

Just then Katherine revived, but the pain was so intense that she fainted again, and the physician looked exceedingly grave when he arrived. He sent for a trained nurse immediately, and, after treating the burns and giving her something to allay the awful agony, he left her in charge of the nurse.

"Of course, you will notify the police at once," he said to the minister. "I do not think her eyes are injured, but she will suffer a good deal, and her beauty is gone forever."

John's voice was then heard calling, and, when the doctor of medicine went downstairs, they found him guarding a madman.

"The wages of sin is death," said the doctor of divinity.

"Morphine, dissipation, and excitement," said the doctor of medicine, but both diagnoses amounted to the same thing, for God's laws are written in the Book and in the human body with the same pen.

CHAPTER XXV

"WHOM GOD HATH JOINED"

MANY weeks passed along wearily before Katharine was able to get out of her bed. Alice and Katie Finnegan nursed her day and night, and her father and John were untiring in their love and devotion. Hundreds of unanswered letters breathing love and prayer and hope were in her little desk, and she loved to read them all over and over, but none touched her heart as did the missives from Sing Sing Prison, where many redeemed men were asking their newly found Father to spare the life of her who had brought them to the light. And there were letters from the keepers and the warden, all telling how deeply she was loved by the men she had been the means of leading to Christ; how hopefully they were looking forward to her recovery, and how a visible change had been taking place in the men's conduct ever since her first visit there. Indeed, it was said that the entire discipline was so changed that the officials were as anxious to have her back as were the men.

The little girls of the Finnegan Association brought flowers several times a week, and Katie read her long reports (always original and amusing), that told of the progress of the club. It had its own rooms now, for Mrs. de Rutyer took up with vigor the work Katherine was compelled to lay down, and the name of the association had been changed at the request of the modest president to the “Fidelity Club,” the latter, indeed, being selected by Katherine after they had all insisted on calling it “The Irving Association.” Alice and a young college woman were teaching domestic science and physical culture; Katie gave moral lectures that made up in freshness, truth, and appropriateness what they lacked in good grammar, and Mrs. de Rutyer prayed, and John tried to play the violin and be happy.

It is a wet, dreary morning. There is a constant drizzling downfall of rain that is not only wet but cold, and the New York sidewalks are unpleasant places to be walking on. A heavy mist hangs over the city, and the lonesome sound of the fog-horns on the river falls on Katherine’s ears as she sits at the window of her room. Alice has gone out; and so she is alone, and glad of it, for sad, sad thoughts are the only ones her brain seems anxious to entertain. She thought of Mr. Grey in the insane

asylum, and earnest prayers for him and his poor wife (who nearly went mad over the disclosure that had to be made) went up from her heart. She thought, too, of the poor suicide's lonely grave, and of Richard, "poor, poor Richard," for the spiritual love that was born in her heart for him had never died. Only pain had been added to it. Where was he? What had happened to him? She sighed, and her eyes were wet as the coat which she rested her head against when John came in out of the cold to cheer her and call her his own brave sufferer and his guardian angel, and to kiss every tear away.

"Hand me the mirror, Johnnie, dear," she said, and, when he reluctantly did, she examined the ugly scars on the right side of her face and said, a little wistfully, "I wish I could have been spared this, Johnnie, for your sake."

"It was the soul that shone in that beautiful face I loved, and that is still there, darling," he said, and she looked again in the mirror and said: "Like Paul, I will carry about in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. He loves me, and you do. I do not think that I will ever mind it again, darling."

"My queen, my queen!" he cried, drawing her closer to him, and, like a tired, happy child, she rested her head on his shoulder and listened to his words of devotion and tenderness, and his promises for her future happiness.

“My happiness is in His dear hands, as is yours, my boy,” she said, when she spoke. “If we are true to Him no cloud will ever come between us.”

“Katherine,” said John, very earnestly, “I wish we were married.”

“So do I,” said Katherine, simply.

“Then let us, darling.”

“Oh, not to-day, Johnnie.”

“To-morrow, then, if you are well enough.”

“Yes, darling, to-morrow,” said Katherine.
“Go and tell my father.”

* * * * *

The rain had all gone away, and the little pools of water that still remained in the streets had the glint of the sunlight in them. It was the same sunlight that stole brightly and softly into the parlor of the parsonage and fell on the pale, little bride and the happy bridegroom-elect. Mrs. de Rutyer and Alice and Katie Finnegan, and the few other invited friends, got their share of the brightness, too; and the clergyman must have, also, because the sunshine from within and without was mirrored on his face. He gave them to each other in the love of Christ, and they looked into each other's eyes and found half the world there. The other half was only to be found by laboring together in Christ's kingdom, and they knew it.

"Oh, God keep you ever and bless you—oh, so much!" sobbed Alice. She looked at the scars, and knew they were there because of her, and she said no word; but Katherine understood it all and whispered, "My own dear sister, my precious girl. You are dearer to me because I suffered for you."

"What can I do for you?" the girl asked, with her soul in her eyes.

"Be true to Him, darling," said Katherine.

"For ever," said Alice, and she kept her word.

"Three cheers for Mrs. Pierce! May she—may she——"

It was all Katie Finnegan's tears would allow her to say, and no one else attempted to say anything.

"To-day is Wednesday," said Katherine, after a long pause. "John and I are to go to some little spot on the Hudson which he has discovered, until Sunday. Then we will go to Sing Sing Prison, and how I shall enjoy being there again, and with——"

Katherine said no more, but the others understood, and John grew several inches in his own estimation and said, "If you had not added *that*, I would have left you there."

Of course everybody had to laugh at this, though for some strange reason they all felt more like crying, and then Katherine slipped into the library to say good-by to her father.

"God be with you, my baby," he said, speaking to her as he was wont to do when the brown eyes were altogether roguish, with none of the seriousness that is in them to-day.

"You are to be a great woman, I feel sure, but—but, my little girl, I almost wish you were a baby again."

It was very natural that they should both cry then, for they thought of those days when papa was the most wonderful man in all the world, and baby the most wonderful girlie, and when there was no suffering and no John and nobody, only themselves and another dear one who had crossed to the beyond. But then Katherine kissed her father and fondled his hands and told him how good John was and how good they would both be to their dear father, and that they should laugh on her wedding-day and thank God for all His goodness and for the many "boys" and "girls" into whose lives she was going to enter in the future. So they laughed and were glad and parted.

While they sped on their wedding tour, the convict's bonds were burning into the soul of Richard Masterson, whom the prison register knew as Martin Richards, and the keepers by a number that had four figures in it.

CHAPTER XXVI

WITHIN THE WALLS OF SING SING

"My heart longs for a sight of her as the drowning man longs for the approaching sail that is to save him, as the repentant sinner longs for the peace of God—ah, yes, and as the tired traveller dying of thirst craves for the pure spring by the wayside."

Richard leaned his hands on his head. Somehow, the words, "pure spring," recalled far-away days from which sprang memories of a beautiful country home back in the fields, where a hot-headed, impulsive boy ran around and looked across the meadows to the railway that he knew led on to the big city. Oh, those early days! The noble longings—for every one was noble then, though misunderstood—came back to him now. He was going to conquer the world, going to prove to his father and mother that he had talent and ability, that the world needed him to make it better. How he used to preach of goodness and patriotism and bravery, with only the birds and the squirrels

for an audience. And what songs he wrote! Songs that were to stir the sluggish blood in unromantic hearts, for Richard loved God and nature and his country then, but an untrained, haughty mother had determined that he was to be a man of cold business, and his father knew that all boys were foolish, and tried to prove to him that the man who succeeds in life and counts his success in money is the only man worthy of the name. He himself had succeeded. He was one of the foremost men in his town, but Richard did not care for that. He loved life and color; he longed to be free, to be a man who would become something, not *do* something, and alas, alas, here he is in Sing Sing Prison!

From his cell he hears the cry of a child. Perhaps it is some little one who comes to see a convict father, or maybe it is a child being carried around by some visitor to be taught a moral lesson by the wretches he sees. Richard groans and calls for Stevie, and lower and lower sinks his head.

He takes a letter out of his pocket and reads:

"DEAR DICK:—

Sorry to hear of your plight, but I cannot do anything for you on account of circumstances. I called on your wife to sympathize with her, *and found she was not yours at all, but mine*, the girl

I once told you of. Jennie asks me to ask you to forgive her for the deception; but she says you never loved her, and she pleaded so hard to be forgiven by me, saying that it was I who drove her to do wrong, by my wrong doing; that I have forgiven her. I never knew she had any idea that I was a bad chap in those days, but I loved her all the same, and I guess one has as much of a right to be wicked as another, so we are quits now. I love Jennie, and always have, so we're going away where no one will ever find us and begin again. I have sold the saloon, and Lawyer Williams, our old friend, has your share, \$1,000. You will get it when you come out. Stevie goes with us. I have a bit of a grudge against you, Dick, for you treated Jennie badly.

“NED.”

“Well, he has been pretty honest, anyhow,” says Richard, after reading the letter. The lease and place were in his name, and he need not have given me a dollar. But I will never touch it, anyhow. I am free now to love and marry, but,” bitterly, “I am a convict, though that matters little, after all, to me, for Katherine Irving never would love me anyhow.

“Oh, how mad I was, how blind, how conceited! She as pure as the dew from heaven! I a leprous scoundrel! She with her great ideals; I with mine dead and gone long ago—and I thought she would

love me ; I thought her kindness was affection ; her pity the tenderness that was in her heart for me !”

Richard paused in his train of thinking and then said : “ I suppose this is some of the bitterness women who have gone wrong have to taste. Men rarely have to, but Katherine is not like other women. Well, if I only had Stevie I might look up again. Oh, God, you have left me like a lone tree stripped by the forest wind. Please destroy me, for my heart is craving for something to fill it, and there is none to answer.”

It is the first honest prayer Richard ever uttered, and God heard it and sends back to his heart words Katherine had often quoted, “ Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.”

“ Rest ! rest ! rest ! ” he cries. “ Oh, to rest from longing for her ; oh, to get peace in my heart. Oh, God, teach me to forget her and to know Thee. Oh, Christ, I never can be good or make my soul white, but You died for me. Please do it.”

Down on the floor of his cell he throws himself, and the tears run down his face while his soul beats itself in agony against the bars put up by its own longings ; and then the tender Son of God visits the prisoner in his cell and speaks peace to the tempest-tossed soul ; and, lo, the star of hope shines

into the room of sorrow and lights it with a light that is divine. Faith, too, arises, and Richard ceases to worry for Stevie, but he tells his God about it and trusts Him. The burden of his daily prayer becomes, "My dear Christ, bless Katherine and her father and Mr. Pierce. Let me live to prove that I love Thee and am not a hypocrite now, and bring back my baby to me, and—Thy will be done."

He *would* long for Steve; but his tears of longing are no bitter ones, and when he thinks of Katherine it is not with the hope that he may win her love, but that she may yet believe in him and know her labors have not been in vain.

Richard has been born again and a new heart has been given to him.

"One of the men asked me to request you to attend services in the chapel this morning," said one of the keepers, carelessly opening Richard's cell door on Sunday morning.

"Do you mean one of the—the convicts?" asked Richard.

"Yes, a converted one."

"Tell me about him," said Richard, his interest being suddenly aroused, and a longing to see this man who was like himself sprang up in his heart.

"Oh, he works in the office—been put there for

good conduct since his conversion, as he calls it. Some woman—blessed if I know who she is, I forget her name—preached here a couple of Sundays and all the fellows liked her. Some are behaving better ever since. I didn't hear her myself, but some of the other keepers says she's handsome and speaks in an entertaining way. Would you like to hear her to-day?"

"Yes," said Richard. He had not attended the chapel services before, but he was anxious to go now, though no thought that this woman was his Katherine, his deliverer, his idol, ever entered his heart. She was in the heart of New York, Chinatown, or in her father's church at that moment, he assured himself, and had, of course, forgotten all about him. But he would like to hear a woman's voice in this lonely place, and especially one who told about Christ, for he was longing to know more and more about the Way, the Truth, and the Life. And so it was that he went to the chapel.

CHAPTER XXVII

A KNIGHT OF THE NEW CHIVALRY

THE chapel is a large square room, dimly lighted by the small barred windows. At one end of the room is a platform with a railing several feet high around it, and here is stationed the little parlor-organ presided over by a convict organist, and beside him are the twenty men who compose the choir. They are all in the prison dress, and because they are, it is quite natural that the casual visitor should pronounce them all alike. Quite natural, I said—well, whether it is or not, they do, and the men know they do. Below the structure on which the choir is stationed is the platform used as a pulpit, its only furniture being a reading-desk and three large chairs. A student's lamp is burning brightly and doing its best to take the place of the sun's rays that are so hopelessly barred out. The "pews" are only wooden benches with no backs to them, but even these are gladly appropriated by the early arrivals, and the later ones troop in and seek for places. They know that it is Kath-

erine who is to speak, and being assured that the place would be filled, they have thoughtfully provided themselves with the little stools they are allowed to have in their cells, and so they file up the middle aisle and try to make themselves as comfortable as possible. There is intense eagerness and expectancy on the faces of everyone present, and quick alert glances, and others more slow and more cynical are directed toward the door. Some impulsive ones show their delight; others, with that natural reserve that is found even in prison, hide their expectancy, and others (very much in the minority) make scoffing grimaces and smile in a superior sort of way.

The organist plays something that is soft, sweet, and soothing, and Richard shuts his eyes and seems to float on the wings of that musical angel to the very throne of God. The convict's dress, he and the other men wear, are shut out; the prison walls are forgotten; the black, sad past, Katherine, Stevie, Jennie all fade away; and he feels himself caught up to the very bosom of God. The men give one ringing cheer and then, in a glad unison, they sing, "Let the blessed sunshine in." It disturbs Richard and brings him back to himself, and he opens his eyes slowly and then—the stripes on the man's clothes in front of him all run into one,

the building seems to be moving, the singing seems like the rush of some mountain stream, and he is not conscious for a moment of who he himself is. There *she* is before him, but so changed! She is paler and thinner, and her heavy brown hair that crowns her forehead only emphasizes her paleness. The mischievous eyes are altogether sad, and there is something in the slight girlish figure that brings the tears to his own. But it is not that! What is that horrid disfigurement, that terrible scar on her face?

The pleasant-faced chaplain is presenting some flowers to Katherine and telling her of the sympathy of the men and officials for her in her sad affliction, and she is looking demurely at the floor. Perhaps she knows what is coming. Richard certainly does not, though he sees John near her, and when with playful and kindly words the chaplain explains to the men that she is no longer Miss Irving, but Mrs. Pierce, Richard leans his head on his hand and feels as if there is nothing now in all the world to live for. Oh, to get away from the chapel to the solitude of his own cell, where he could think, and think, and think! But the men are cheering, and she "whose name is now Mrs. Pierce" is smiling down at them with the old rare smile he had seen on her face so many, many times. It is such

a bright, beaming smile that it covered up the scar with its beautiful glow, and, broken spirited as he is, Richard notices the perfect understanding between herself and the men. It is not one bit like a prison audience.

"No danger of her preaching about the Prodigal Son like the other cranks that comes here," whispered his next neighbor to Richard. And then he added, laughingly, "We've been hearing so long about fatted calves and swine until we know how much a pound both brought in Jerusalem, and how the liver and bacon tasted."

Richard tries to smile, but his friend does not notice how ruefully he fails, for Katherine is talking and every eye is upon her face. She tells them what their sympathy meant to her during her long illness, but as to its cause she says not a word. She speaks to them in the quiet conversational way a friend is apt to talk to another about herself. She tells of her thoughts of them and her longings to get back to see them again, and then, with a calm light on her face and a strange softness in her voice, she tells them of the regenerating power of Christ that can make them princes in His Kingdom and veritable sons of God, if they give themselves to Him. Like a mother talking to her children, she goes on, seeming to see into every soul and to

fathom its loneliness and hear its sorrow and despair. She tells them that she believes in them; that goodness and nobility is their heritage; that they can be true men, and that every one of them is dear to her and her husband. She says, too, that she will give her life in helping them to regain what they have lost—aye, it will be much more than they ever knew about.

The men's eyes are on her face, and unconsciously they have straightened themselves up in their seats and seem nobler men already.

"Some of you are already realizing the peace of God and are finding His strength growing in your souls day by day," said Katherine. "If God is all I told you He was; if He makes up for the past and brightens the future, stand up so that your brothers can see that it is so."

Richard felt his head growing dizzy. How could *he* stand up and let her see him. Of course, she would think him a hypocrite and despise him and look at his convict's dress and cropped hair, and decide that he was in his right place at last. But then, his faith! his God! Ah, Richard Masterson is another man now, and with all considerations of self thrown to the winds he is standing up for God and smiling on the other men, though his face is as white as a winding-sheet, and the

lump in his throat seems to be slowly strangling him. There are about ten other men standing and Katherine sees him last. He sees her start, and notices John's surprised look, too. He looks bravely at her and sees the color come and go on her face, and then he hears her voice saying, with a strange new softness in it and a wealth of wonderful meaning to him, "My Father, I thank thee!"

He knows her eyes—soft, half-smiling, half-tearful eyes—are on his face, and he sinks back into the seat. The tears are running down Katherine's cheeks now, and she does not try to hide them. Her arms are outstretched, and in the natural simple eloquence that reaches the souls of her audience at once, she asks for others to come back to God, too. Ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty hands are raised to signify the longings in the souls of their owners, and then she closes the service by asking John to pray. His prayer is a humble, manly, brotherly one, and when the chaplain pronounces the benediction there is a hallowed, sacred feeling pervading the very air.

The convicts troop out and return to their cells, and the one whose number contains four figures is on his knees almost before his cell-door closes on him. Katherine and John find him there, and she kneels down beside him and says: "God bless you, God bless you," as if no other words will come to

give vent to the joy in her heart. He sobs aloud, but gives her no greeting, and John, brave, tender-hearted John, goes up to him and wipes the tears from his eyes as his own mother might have done. The convict looks up with a questioning look that is too eloquent for speech, and John says: "Do not even mention forgiveness, old chap. I believe in you with all my soul and so does my wife."

Katherine nods, and Richard says: "Neither of you have reason to—but—but—Oh, I mean it this time."

Deep emotion and honest earnestness are rarely eloquent in expression, but their very lack of power always convinces, and this time was no exception.

"How long have you been here, Brother," asked John.

"Since that night I met you—I was arrested a little later."

"Ah, I knew the tale was a falsehood," said Katherine. "I knew Richard Masterson was not a deliberate coward."

He looked questioningly at her, and then she told him of Mr. Grey's threats, of his statements that he, Richard, was in the conspiracy, and of the mad attempt to take her life that awful night in the parsonage parlors. Richard was horror-stricken, and with bowed head confessed that the reason he

went to New Hamburg was because the Christian Merchant told him she was there and made him believe that she loved him after all.

"I was a rascal, mad, impulsive and wicked; but I would not attempt to defame your character. Please do not believe that of me."

"I do not," said Katherine, quietly, and when he told her of his innocence of the crime he was charged with, she said, looking in his eyes, "I believe you are innocent of that, too, and I shall make every effort to prove that you are."

"I *have* done things, perhaps, that were just as bad, but I did not do this," said Richard, and then he told her about his wife and Ned and Stevie, and as he watched her face he knew that Katherine felt the pity she did not know how to speak. They talked and prayed together for nearly an hour, and then Richard told her she would have to go because he knew that some of the other men wanted to see her.

"Poor fellows! Some of them look wretched enough. Go to them and I will pray while you are with them that God may show you how to reach their hearts," was his parting message to her.

"Ah, that is spoken like a true child of God," said Katherine, and she turned to go away—a great thankfulness filling her heart.

Then John came up to him, the two men shook hands warmly, and when they parted it was with even a stronger clasp of the hand and with a look of confidence and trust on the faces of both.

And now Richard was alone. He had seen her again. She had been sent in answer to his prayers, he felt sure; but she was married and no longer even in his own soul could he call her *his Katherine*.

"Well, I will be brave," he said, and he drew himself to his full height as he said it. "The way is dark to-day, but God will not try me any more than I am able to bear. I will always love her, for she is the one human being in all the world who discovered the real heart in me; but there is no reason why I should be sad or make her so. And," meditatively, "*he* is a fine fellow. Pierce is worthy of her; I was not. Now, *that* is settled; and, God helping me, I will commence to build up some character at once by tearing down all the bad fences I have been raising all my life. Henceforth I will be obedient to God, and even if my heart is breaking, I will smile for her sake. Poor, poor child! She will have enough to bear in her strange hard ministry without my nonsense and pettishness annoying her."

Ah, Richard is learning to know what real love

is, and when John and Katherine return to his cell late that evening to say good-by to him, they listen in new wonder to his plans for helping his fellow-prisoners, his hopes for the future when he will aid them in the work, his warnings to her to take good care of herself, and the Christian optimism that gilds every word he utters.

And in his happy letters to her she never knew that Richard was fighting a braver battle than any soldier ever fought on the battle-field, but she had a little intimation of it when at her next service at the prison a pencilled line, that read as follows, was brought to her by one of the keepers:

“Do not come to see me to-day. I want to fight my battles alone with only God to help. I am true, and will yet belong to our dear Jesus in body, soul, and spirit. God bless and keep you, my guardian angel. Remember me to your husband and father and dear little Katie Finnegan; and have no fear for me, for I will be true as long as I live. I am dead in earnest and neither death nor hell can turn me aside.

RICHARD MASTERSON.”

CHAPTER XXVIII

HOW A MAN IS BUILT

IN the ten months succeeding that memorable day at Sing Sing Prison, many things have happened, but nothing that has been so wonderful as the complete change in Richard Masterson. He has not been alone in his transformation, for the same slow process of growth that has been going on in his soul has been going on in fifty others. But it is with him we have to deal, for we know him, whereas we have only been casually introduced to the others. There is strength in his face and masterfulness in the very way he carries himself, and he has so completely conquered himself by the rigorous course of soul and mind discipline that comes to all in whom the Spirit of God dwells, that the warden has given him a clerkship and writes frequently to Katherine of the fine character that is constantly displaying itself by some act of unselfishness or thoughtfulness. If a man is sick, Richard pleads to be allowed to go to him; if a man is about to be released, he asks for and obtains permission of the warden to speak to him, and he does not let the man

go until he promises to go and see Katherine and her husband when he goes to New York. Some of the men approached in this way object to everything religious, and they demur accordingly, but when he tells them that Katherine and her husband are willing to believe in them and give them a chance, and that few people are ready to do that, they look into his kindly eyes and promise to "think the matter over."

"No, no; that will not do," Richard says, "for that is indecision. Men like you and me must be certain of what we are going to do or we are lost. Wavering may do for mild-mannered fellows who can afford that sort of thing. We must be so good that we are constantly at it."

"Some of the boys say you were sent here wrongfully," the interviewed man would frequently say.

"Oh, well, never mind that," Richard would answer quietly, for he did not want his innocence proven if it would separate him from the men he was laboring to save.

"The police will be awaiting you at the station, and no employer in New York who learns about you would let you work even for nothing," he would continue earnestly; "so go to her, like a good boy, and she will help you."

The thought that their sentences were not for two, five or ten years, as the judge stated, but for life; and that they would carry the brand of their crime wherever they went, frequently embittered the men; but Richard would cheer and strengthen them, and, on Sunday, his rich, brave voice could be heard in the choir inspiring them to better things, and bidding them to look up and hope.

When a converted man left prison, he would plead with him to remain true; reminding him that every failure would make it harder for another to rise and to be trusted. It took months of prayer and resolve and brave endurance to conquer the love in his heart for John Pierce's wife. He knew the day, aye, the very hour, when her letter would arrive; he could see in prospective the little gray envelope and the handwriting that set his heart throbbing and his never too sluggish blood running so fast as to make him unsteady in his head. He took the letters from the prison official month after month, and put them in his pocket unread, for he was determined not to scan one word until he recognized the fact that it was his friend and not his sweetheart that was writing to him. When the green monster attempted to torment him with jealousy he failed disgracefully, and so in that quiet cell, brave battles were fought and won that were

going to equip a hero for the seething battle of life. The difference between a Christian and other men is not that one is tempted and the other is not, but that one is conquered by his tempter, and the other conquers. Innocence is only ignorance of sin, but he who conquers the evil in himself is the one, God makes a pillar in His Temple. The Demon of Appetite would sometimes come to him and try hard to occupy his old quarters, and then Richard would taste of the bitterness that every soul that has ever yielded to sin and leaves it tastes. "But God—but God—but God !" he would cry, and with this slogan he won.

In two weeks more he will be free, and he sits in his cell, with a calm light and a strong resolve on his face, and as we look at the clear-cut mouth, the bright gray eyes in which there is a touch of sadness, and the strength of purpose that is weaving its lines of freedom around the chin, we scarcely recognize the hot-headed lover of a year before. Certainly, there is none of the saloon-keeper, and still less of the self-indulgent slave who grew miserable and uncontrollable when deprived of his own way.

He has Katherine's last letter in his right hand and her picture in his left, and he is talking to the latter as if it understood every word he said.

"I want you no longer with the selfish, sinful affection I once did. Oh," he cried, as he looked into his own heart and saw the wonderful change wrought there, "what a God we have!—and yet," musingly, "there are Christians who think they need to suffer through longing for some unlawful thing. Yes, and they joy in it and call it 'temptation.' Ah, He is able to deliver us and to give us rest and peace and victory. What I called curses were only the chariots of God's blessings, and," with a sad smile, "what I craved as blessings in my past life, came to me with the canker of the worm and the bite of the locust." Here Richard threw back his head and said with conviction: "A man without God's guidance is a fool and—a knave."

"Yes, I was both," he said, as if answering some voice within his soul, and, slowly, "because there are many others of the same kind I must warn this brave saint of God. She must not trust others as she trusted me. It is not that we are so bad, but we are so weak, and she, with her royal faith in everybody, is liable to forget that. But," turning his eyes to heaven, "forbid it Lord that she should ever become the over-careful Christian who fears to grasp a sinner's hand."

But there was nothing to fear. Katherine is

trusting her God for guidance now and He does not make cranks of His noblest children.

Before Richard closed his eyes that night he had decided upon what his future life would be. John has offered him a scholarship in a college where he can prepare himself for the ministry. But he will not take any such easy road. He will go to work on the public highways if needs be, and will thus show the other men that a man can be poor and pure at the same time. Katherine will agree with him, he knows. Richard has won too much moral muscle by self-denial and sole dependence upon God, to choose the easy thing when he doubted whether it was the right thing or not.

CHAPTER XXIX

KATIE FINNEGAN ON UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE

KATIE FINNEGAN was returning from the public school with her little brain busily planning her next talk to the Fidelity girls and her future life; for ambitious, indeed, were the designs of this fifteen-year-old girl. Peter was to be a carpenter, Nellie a school teacher, and Annie a milliner. She had studied their tastes and watched their growing preferences for people and things, and she was determined that after they were graduated from the public school they all would go to work except Nellie. She would go to the Normal College, and with what pride Katie would introduce her in the days to come as——

“Le’mé see, what would I call her?” asked Katie of herself as she walked home. “Oh, yes. I would say, ‘Dis is me sister—a New York Petticog. No, dat ain’t right; dat’s too much like petticoat, but it sounds somethin’ like dat. Hully Bones—oh, what would Mrs. de Rutyer say if she heard me use talk o’ dat color! My, but I must screw me eyes at de dickshunary more.”

Katie Finnegan on Universal Suffrage 265

And Katie herself—what would she be ? Oh, she did not know. She had intense faith in herself, and she might be anything great. She certainly would be *something* great.

Absorbed in herself and her plans she had gone on, not noticing that she had wandered a little out of her way, and when she lifted up her eyes she found herself in front of one of the newest and most fashionable of the uptown hotels, and she noticed that the announcement was made on a card near one of the entrances that, "The Sorceress Club meets here to-day."

"Mesopotamia !" cried Katie. "Dat's de swell-est wiman's club in town. Say ! I'd like to get some pointers dere for my club. Wonder can I get in ?"

To think with Katie was to act, and her audacious and cool effrontery carried her to the elevator safely without any questions being asked. But at the door of the little ball-room, which was the meeting-place for the Sorceresses, a fine-looking woman, elegantly gowned, and with a beautiful, kindly face, said, "Have you a ticket ?"

"I've got a laundry ticket," answered Katie roguishly, producing a piece of yellow paper on which were some Chinese hieroglyphics.

"Oh, that will not do," said the lady, smilingly.

"See here," said Katie with dignity, "I'm president of a club, I am, an' I'd like to see how ye manages tings here, dat's all."

"Where is your club?" asked the President of the Sorceresses, for she it was.

"Oh, tain't in any swell place like dis," said Katie, apologetically. "It's in Chinatown, but we're nearly all Christians, an' we're tryin' to help each udder. It used ter be de Finnegan Association—called after me, ye know. Dat is my name—Finnegan—not association, o' course."

"Of course," assented the fashionable woman, looking amused but interested.

"Well, it's now de Fidelity Club, an' I'm President, an' we talk 'bout how to keep straight; why some of us don't; why dirt is ever popular among us; and why we hain't got more o' God in our hearts. What do you folks talk about?"

"I believe the subjects are nearly the same," said the clubwoman thoughtfully, "though we give them more formidable names, and we do not speak of ourselves."

"I see," said Katie. "Ye get at it in a round-about way, an' den Mrs. Chipnig tinks dat's good for Mrs. Jumparound, but not for her. Well, o' course," looking admiringly at the clubwoman, "yer a cleaner lookin' lot den we are."

Katie Finnegan on Universal Suffrage 267

"Now, I would like very much to have you remain," said the President, "and you are at perfect liberty to take part in the discussions. Because we wear fine clothes and meet in this beautiful place you may think we have no serious purpose in life, but we really have."

"Is dis club fer fun?" asked Katie.

"Oh, no," said the President, "we are very serious. The men say that we really take ourselves too serious."

"Men's clubs! Oh, say!" said Katie in a tone of disgust. "Me Uncle Jim jined one an' he used to do nawthin there but swill beer an' talk politics, till he got so hoarse he couldn't call out de stations on de elevated road, where he was workin', so he got de grand bounce. O' course, *he* b'longed to a down-town club."

"Well, there is not a great deal of difference," said the clubwoman, smiling; "though I believe they drink champagne instead of beer, uptown."

"An' de politics?" asked Katie.

"Oh, they never lose their 'jobs' through it," she answered, smilingly. "They never take politics seriously."

"Now, I like fun," said Katie, meditatively, "but dis world's a mighty affair, an' we mustn't laugh too much, for it goes round awful fast, an' some

fellers goes round wid it. It's de ones dats apt to go round, dat I'm after. Dere ought ter be fun in de clubs, else we'll wear out; but funny clubs wid nawthin else in dem is no better dan a Punch an' Judy show."

The President has to call the meeting to order, so she leads Katie to a front seat, and a young woman commences to sing about "a bonnie highland laddie." Katie likes her voice, but not the dialect, so she looks around at the beautiful hangings, the cushioned seats, the glittering candelabra, the wonderful dresses and the purple club banner suspended over the platform, and she is nearly awed into silence.

"Mothers and their responsibilities" are discussed, and Katie thinks that a very good subject, indeed. All agree that woman's first place is her home, if she happens to have one; but they say that her second place is wherever she is needed most and where she can do the greatest good and bless the greatest number, and Katie says, "Dat's right," audibly. The Rev. Cynthia Ford, a prominent member, says that until woman has the right to vote she has no right at all except what is given her by way of courtesy.

"An' she'll only get dat when politeness is pop'lar," broke in Katie, and everybody looked surprised and then laughed.

Katie Finnegan on Universal Suffrage 269

"They say we are different from men and so cannot understand how to govern ourselves, or how to use the elective franchise," continues the Rev. Cynthia.

"Well," broke in Katie again, "if we're different from de udder half, how'n de world will dey know what's good fer us. If I never wore pants and galluses how am I goin' to dictate to me brudder how dey ought ter be put on?"

This was greeted with cheers and laughter, and the reporters present all looked in Katie's direction.

"Will our visitor tell us what she thinks about this question of voting?" asked the President.

"Well, see here," said Katie, earnestly, "it's like dis. I don't want to be a man—oh, dear, no, but I b'lieve in bein' treated like a sensible bein'. I wouldn't let no man vote who lives wrong, an' no woman neither; an' I'd let no man vote who was in de p'lice courts every few days an' didn't know B from a bag o' beans. Same rule for women. Right's right, you know. If a man is called strong-minded he looks proud an' t'inks he ought ter get a politician's job. If a woman's called de same t'ing, people laugh. Guess dey likes her weak, like Chinese tea. If a woman sits in de house an' minds de kids an' says she knows nothin', she's a good

mudder (in me eye), but if she objects to tings 'll make de kid bad, an' asks fur de right to fix dem straight, she's a chump. Me brudder tells me (dough I could buy an' sell him, for Jimmy is a bit of a fool, if I do have to say it) dat I can't vote because I can't fight if dere's a war. Well, we only has a war 'bout every thirty years, but we has schools and churches an' teachin' o' youngsters all de time, an' I guess if dere's any good bein' done, de women's in de front. Bless de men, where would dey get soldiers if women didn't give 'em to 'em? War hain't de only ting to be done. Let's divide de work and de profits. Woman's willin' to nurse an' give herself an' her money and her heart an' her sons. What more can she do? Men's all right. Some kind o' women is gossips an' fools, but if dey wasn't dey'd be out o' place wid men wa't buys votes an' drinks rum, and runs after de tail end of a wagon where some politician is preachin' crazy stuff about de people, dat dey doesn't understand, dough dey pretends dey does. If I'm a different animal from me brudders dey never can decide wa't kind o' feed is good fer me. Give me a vote an' I'll drop it in de right box, an' I'll bet yer a dollar I'll drop it in wid a clean hand, too. Women goes bad sometimes, but as a rule dey don't sell tings dey holds dear."

Katie Finnegan on Universal Suffrage 271

This speech was greeted with prolonged cheering, the most dignified of the Sorceresses joining with avidity, while the reporters made hasty notes.

Songs and reading followed, and after a paper was read on "Industrial Problems in Woman's World," an erudite member raised the question, "Which is the most important sense, sight or feeling?" Many abstruse questions were raised that baffled Katie badly, and she could not help asking herself of what good would the decision be if they ever came to one, which was not at all likely. She must have revealed the fact that she was getting very weary, for the President looked down at her with an amused look that was encouraging and not a little mischievous.

"It's like dis wid me," said Katie, taking the sly hint conveyed, and rising to her feet. "I b'lieve sight's de most important. W'en I was a kid a mule nearly kilt me. If I'd seen him before I felt him I'd have been all right."

The Rev. Cynthia Ford, who had a quick sense of humor applauded this, and her laugh was so infectious that even the aggrieved member, who did not like to be disposed of in this undignified manner, joined in the mirth. But there was one woman who would not be appeased, and she attempted to freeze Katie with a cold stare.

"The marvellous sense of touch in blind people and in babies," she said, "shows how important feeling is. Babies feel before they notice, and the sense of touch is often so strong in some fine natures that a touch of the hand is necessary to arouse their finest feelings."

"Oh, dat might make 'em more spoony dan lookin' at em," said Katie, interrupting.

"Will the chair please stop this interruption?" cried the tragic voice of the speaker out of the din that followed.

"Here, my name's Finnegan and not interruption," said Katie, indignantly. "In Chinatown we call our chair lady Mrs. President, an' not a common chair."

"You have the floor, Madam," said the member, sitting down.

"T'ank ye," said Katie, looking at the polished wood beneath her feet. "I wish I could move it down town. Say, loidy, don't get mad; ye may be right, ye know. I heard of a fresh young feller w'at went to a high toned school, an' he was walkin' one day an' met de head master. De fresh guy goes along an' never notices de master. P'raps he was waitin' to be touched.

" 'Here,' said de master, 'don't ye know me?'

" 'No, sir.'

“ ‘How long ye bin in school?’

“ ‘A week, sir.’

“ ‘Oh, I see,’ said de master; ‘puppies is blind till dey’re nine days old.’ Dat prove you to be right, loidy. ’Twas feelin’ he needed.”

One angry clubwoman sat in her seat and refused to be comforted, but the others gathered around Katie and lionized her to her heart’s content. And there was not one bit of exclusiveness or any of the patronizing element in it at all.

“Yer all right,” said Katie to an enthusiastic member who asked to call at her house, “but I can’t be jollied. I’m in fer business an’ have no time fer foolin’ about. You women who meet here can do somethin’ fer me work if ye want to, an’ if I do say it meself (an’ I don’t purtend to know everything) yez ought ter all be doin’ somethin’ in dat way an’ so ought every udder woman’s club in town. Say, de women w’ats in here to-day could make heaven of Chinatown if dey gave demselves, an’ dey’ve money to do it.”

“What can I do, Miss Finnegan?”

“If yer a Christian ye can do everyting; if yer not, ye can’t do much of anything except to give us money, for de girls feel right into yer hearts, an’ dey knows w’ats w’at. If yer tellin’ dem to be good an’ get over dey’re tempers, dey know wedder

you have done dat fer yerself or not. Say, ma'am, don't tink I'm fresh in talkin' dis way. I want ter be dead honest wid ye. If every woman in here was as good as our Miss Irving—I mean our Mrs. Pierce—de devil would s'render quick enough."

"May I see your Mrs. Pierce?" asked the woman, thoughtfully.

"Ye bet ye can," said Katie, giving her Katherine's address; "an' w'en ye've seen her ye've seen a walkin' edition o' de New Testament. Good-by. Give me regards to de udder loidies. It's gettin' late an' I must be off."

"Good-by, Miss Finnegan; I hope we will meet again."

"Good-by, me friend," and Katie threw a kiss from the tips of her fingers to the President, who was away at the other end of the room.

CHAPTER XXX

FROM LOCKSTEP AND STRIPES

It is Richard's last night in Sing Sing Prison, and when nine o'clock is announced by the putting out of all the lights he goes to his bed but not to sleep. To-morrow he will be a free man; to-morrow he will be able to swing his legs and arms without the thought of the hated lockstep. He will never hear that "halt" of slavery and shame called again; he will see Katherine, and there will be no stripes of bondage and disgrace encircling the hand he will reach out to her. How dear New York was after all; how glad he would be to see the Grand Central Station and touch shoulder to shoulder with the busy world again! He felt as if he could jump for very joy; and little sleep visited his eyes all night. How good it was of the warden to tell the barber to skip him during the past few weeks, for he did not want to return to freedom with that cropped head that would mark him the moment he arrived at the station. He had no mustache, and

were it not so dark in his cell we would see that he looked all the better for it. His clear, strong mouth and white teeth added to the attractiveness of his finely cut features and clear honest eyes. Ever and anon he ran his hand through his brown hair and rumbled it over his forehead as he thought of that first night when he tried to sleep in a prison bed, but the agony of remorse, the madness, the wildness and hate kept him awake then; to-night it is joy, gladness, hope, and faith.

Well, to be sure, we must have slept a little after all for here it is already day and the prison is full of activity. He sees the other convicts march past his cell-door, for he is not allowed out until they are in the shops and at work. This is a precautionary measure taken, in order that no notes to the outside world may be sent by the released prisoner, and Richard watches the gloomy faces as they pass. He has always observed the prison discipline even on the smallest points, but this morning he breaks it, for he feels if he does not that his own heart will break.

"Good-by, boys; God bless you every one. Be brave," he cries, and a faint smile lights the darkness on every face. A blue-coated keeper comes a little later and calls his name and tells him he is free, but that he ought not to be for that breach

of discipline ; but Richard knows that that pressure in his arm tells another story. He seems to be walking on air, and it is only when he is on the scales and being weighed that he realizes that he has some avoirdupois left after all. There are ten other men being released with him, and in a few moments all are equipped from head to foot in new clothes, and then into the hated lockstep they fall again and march through the prison yard, quietly waving a farewell to white-faced, broken-looking men, who look after them as they have looked after many another during the long, dark years since the State took possession of them.

At the reception-room just inside of the gate their names and pedigrees are taken again as on that first day, and then they receive their discharges, together with ten dollars and the amount of their prison salaries computed at less than two cents a day. The warden and several of the keepers say good-by to Richard, and he is the only one they do not admonish not to come back again. They know that he never will, and as he lifts his head and reveals a face where a solitary tear that refused to be repressed makes its lonely way down his cheek, the warden strikes him on the back and clasps his hand in a warm farewell.

A keeper accompanies them to the station and

can scarcely keep up with them as they rush down the steep hill, some shouting with the sheer delight of being free, others almost speechless with the joy of it, and still others with the fear of the future and the blackness of the city where neither home nor friends await them.

After getting their tickets from the keeper, some of the men ran and bought cigarettes and adjourned to the smoking-car, revelling in the unprecedented dissipation of a smoke that is nobody's business but their own. Richard sat in his seat and looked out of the window, and, as the beautiful Hudson rose up before him, he thought of that ride with Katherine, and of the awful black days that followed. But it is all over now, and he must be doing some good, he tells himself. So he goes to the smoking-car and commences to talk with the men, who were recently his fellow-convicts, about their future; but freedom, as they call it, is too dear to them. No, indeed, they will never go back to their old life, but they want to run a bit around town first and see their old friends. Richard sighs and leaves them, but returns from the door to ask them if they will not call and see him, whether they become religious or not. Yes, they might later on, they said, and, as Richard was about to turn away again, one of them, a roguish-looking, big fellow, who was blow-

ing clouds of smoke around his head, said, "I'll go to see you in a few days, blowed if I won't."

The men interrupted him by roaring, in unison, "Oh, say, listen to Hard Tack."

"Hard Tack" laughed with them, but said he would go all the same, and Richard believed he would and handed him the address of the parsonage, at the same time saying, "Be firm, old fellow."

Immediately one of the party commenced to sing an extempore song, a refrain declared to be the tune of "I'll bet my money on a bob-tailed nag," the chorus of which ran:

"Hard Tack's goin' to be good,
He'll shovel coal and saw up wood;
Oh, you bet he will—
I can see him doin' it."

Roars of laughter followed this, "Hard Tack" joining in each laugh, but this did not discourage Richard, for he saw something in the man's face the others did not, and he prayed for him all the way until the train stopped at the Grand Central Station. Rushing from the car he was met by John and Katherine, and—could he believe it?—his Stevie.

"Papa! my papa!" cried the little fellow, clasp-
ing him around the legs, and passers-by, who saw the woman turn away to hide her emotion and the man clasping his boy to his breast while his white

face told its own story of sorrow, were sure that they recognized a family reconciliation, and that the man returned to his unloved wife because of his boy. But they changed their minds a moment later when the eyes of John and Katherine met.

"How did it happen?" Richard asked Katherine, in a low, sobbing voice, when they entered the cab.

"Your wife's husband—that is, your partner—brought him to the house a week ago," said Katherine. "He said that the boy was constantly crying for you, and that his wife was unwilling you should have no one to welcome you when you returned home. They have both gone to the West, and will never trouble you again, they said."

"Ah, God is good to me," said Richard, sobbing, and John turned away to hide the moisture in his own eyes.

"God!" cries the little fellow, in amazement. "Say, Pop, do you pray?"

"Yes, indeed, darling."

"Then, so will I, Pop. I'll do everything that you do—oh, let me hug you good an' hard. I was cryin' for you all the time. I don't want no nuther papa, do I, Pop?"

"No, darling, and may God make me worthy of you."

"What must I say to that?" asked Stevie, turn-

ing to Katherine, for he had a vague idea that there ought to be some response.

"Say Amen, dearie," said Katherine.

"Amen," said the boy, solemnly, and then he added, after looking at Katherine again, "Pop, I love this lady, don't you?"

"Yes, Stevie, Christ said we were to love one another."

"I didn't hear Him say it, but I love her all the same—say, Pop, marry her, won't you?"

"Oh, but Mrs. Pierce is married," said Richard, laughingly, trying to hide his embarrassment.

"That's nothin', pray for Mr. Pierce to be sent off somewhere. Oh, that's all right, you know. She told me to pray when I wanted anything good—she's good."

"Oh, you rascal!" said John, laughing heartily, in spite of the awkwardness of the situation. "I will take you in hand and teach you a better religion than Mrs. Pierce has. I refuse to be sent off in this summary way."

"Oh, then, keep her, you mean man," said Stevie; "my papa can buy one just as nice as her, or," after a second look at Katherine, "nearly as nice, anyhow."

John laughed in his good-humored way, and then managed to divert little Stephen's thoughts by quar-

relling with him about Katherine's good looks. When the argument is at its highest Katherine turns to Richard and says, softly, "You understand now how dear you are to the heart of God."

"My Saviour!" is his sole reply.

"And, do you believe, too, that I care for you as He does, and believe in you more than ever?" she asked.

"Yes, I know you now."

"And I have always been your friend, and always will be; both myself and my wife are proud to call you our dear friend," said John, heartily.

"Thank you," says Richard, briefly, but with a world of feeling, and then he takes the outstretched hand of each and holds them for a moment. Then Katherine takes Stevie on her lap, and after that they all sit in silence until the house is reached.

"She calls me her friend, and she believes in me again," the ex-convict whispers to himself. And then, with the very light of heaven on his face, he adds, "But, if she did not, it would make no difference, for He has called me friend—not servant, but friend."

CHAPTER XXXI

ONE OF GOD'S IRREGULARS

THE Rev. Dr. Irving and Katie Finnegan have clasped Richard's right and left hand, and, after one look into his face, the clergyman says: "My dear boy, I give you a hearty welcome."

"Thank you, sir," says Richard, quietly; and then, straightening himself up, he looks in the face of the other man and says, "Forgive me for the past; it does not deserve forgiveness; but, oh, do believe me in this—I am true to God."

"I know you are," said the clergyman, with conviction, and then, seeing that Richard's lips trembled, he conducts him to the little parlor. Richard is a little gloomy. After all, it is natural that there should be a reaction after the joy of the night before; the surprise of seeing Stevie, and the knowledge that he is an ex-convict. But he puts the thought from him, and smiles happily when Stevie tries to frighten Katie Finnegan by pretending he is a bear and a monkey and a hyena in turn. His Stevie! his very own boy! No one in the world has

any claim to him except his father, and a proud man his father is as he watches the sprightly, handsome little fellow jump around, glad because he is with his father, but, with the natural way of youngsters, emphasizing that fact only by being happy.

"Come to me, darling," he says, putting his hands to Stevie, and the little fellow runs to him with so much love in the very patter of his shoes, that, as in the old days, it "breaks" Katie "all up."

"Say, Mr. Masterson," she says, "yer all right. I always said ye were, and y'are—that's so;" and she looks challengingly at the clergyman, who really agrees with her and thinks, too, that she is right in leaving the room just then, so he follows, with his head bent in the thoughtful way that he usually carries it.

"Play horsey, Pop," says Stevie, and Richard, who has often played the game before, puts him on his knees, and to the tune of "Up the Rocky Road," shakes and jumps and rattles the very teeth in the little fellow's mouth.

But what does Stevie care for teeth to-day? He can get new ones, but he cannot get a new papa; and this thought so overcomes him that he squeezes Richard so tight that the horse has to stop.

"Sing for me, Pop," he says; "something sweet."

"What shall it be, darling?"

"Oh, anything, so it's nice; say, Pop, aren't you happy?"

"Very happy, darling." And he spoke truly.

"Then, why don't you laugh?"

"The truest happiness is not always the happiness that laughs loudest, darling. I will sing for you."

Katherine and John, sitting upstairs in their own room, heard the strains of "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," the expressive tenor voice giving an added expression to the beautiful hymn and Katherine's eyes grow soft as she listens.

"Oh, John," she says, suddenly, "we must keep Stevie until he grows up or until his father marries. Poor baby! his life has been a strange one, short as it has been. He is a fine little fellow, too, in spite of his ideas, which are utilitarian in the extreme."

"Of course we will keep him, dear," said John, kissing his wife, and then the dinner-bell rang and they went downstairs together. In the dining-room were Dr. Irving, Katie Finnegan, Richard, Stevie, Alice Masland, and "Daddy Longlegs," the latter assuring Dr. Irving that her good angel sent her and she was going to stay to dinner. She insisted on making a solemn speech, which she called "saying grace," and kept at it so long that Stevie

irreverently called out "Next station Hoboken," to the great delight of Katie Finnegan and John, who had their eyes fixed upon her, even though their fingers apparently shut them in from the outer world. After the speech Daddy Longlegs insisted on singing a song of her own composition in such a loud, cracked voice that even the clergyman smiled, which emboldened Katie to say, "Say, you've lost yer calling, sister."

"How's that, my child?" moaned, rather than asked, Daddy, after she had finished the hymn.

"Oh, yez ought to be yelling fish on Friday. Yer voice is as cracked as a cod's back-bone an' yer scale is as changeable as any fish dealer's."

This description, full of Katie's originality and drawled forth in her own expressive way, set everybody laughing except John, who said, soberly, "For shame, Katie. Our friend is as nature made her."

"Dat's so," said Katie. "If anyone's born widout sense dey've got to do widout it, dat's all. Nature hasn't much ter do w'en she makes some people, I tell yer!"

"I believe in angels and dignitaries, and nature had nothing to do with *my* creation, you poor blind child," said Daddy, indignantly.

"Well, 'pon my word, you *are* a bit unnatural

looking," said Katie, helping herself to some peas.

"Katie! Katie!" remonstrated the clergyman, gravely. But Katie would not be quiet and said, "Say, Dr. Irving, I got more common-sense dan p'liteness. If dis dame comes 'round me she don't need to be tinkin' dat me Christian charity will let me listen to her crazy yellin'. It's de likes o' her makes people dead set against Christianity. Dis dame tinks she has wisions, w'en it's a bath she ought to be havin'."

"Katie," said Katherine, looking at her little friend gravely, and not another word would Katie say, despite John's many sly, encouraging glances, which were not lost on Katherine, as he learned to his sorrow an hour later.

That night Richard and John had a long, earnest talk, the result of which was that Richard would board with a Christian family a few blocks away, and that Stevie would make his home at the parsonage; and a few mornings later Richard kissed Stevie good-by and went to work in a factory near by, returning to his home at six o'clock to study until midnight. He made occasional trips to Chinatown to help in the work Katherine and Alice and Katie Finnegan were so bravely trying to do; but his soul was wrapped up in his God, his books,

and his boy; and not even Katherine knew anything of his inner life. She had seen lines of care in his face, but at the same time she had heard songs of gladness issuing from his lips, and no thought of what Richard's life really was, ever entered her mind. She was at rest about him, because she knew he was true. There was nothing more to think about, and there were so many who did not know Christ that she was almost entirely occupied with them.

One evening he came in, his face bright and glad, and he ran up to her and, seizing her by the hand in boyish fashion, said: "Mrs. Pierce, I have good news—such good news! My employer has obtained a position on a large London newspaper for me. It seems too good to be true."

"That is blessed news," said Katherine, "but we will regret your having to go away from us."

"Oh, I am to be its special correspondent here in New York and need not go away," said Richard, his face all aglow with joy. "The salary is good, and I am so happy, because I can give a large part of my time now to God's work. I intend to preach."

"The Rev. Richard Masterson," said Katherine, happily.

"No, I will be one of God's irregulars. I am not going to be ordained."

"And how did your employer come to give you that position?"

"His brother is principal owner of the paper," said Richard, slowly.

"There is more than that in the story, I am sure," said Katherine, quietly.

"Well," he said, looking at the floor, "I obtained a position in the factory for one of the men who was in prison when I was there. He came down on the train with me and promised to come to see me next day."

"Oh, yes, Hard Tack," said Katherine, smiling. "You told me about him."

"Poor Hard Tack!" said Richard. "He did well for several months, but succumbed to the temptation for drink one day, and while under its influence stole \$100 from the safe in the factory office. I paid every dollar of it back. It took a long time to do it, for you know I was a learner and only getting \$10 a week, and was paying a little for board."

"You are God's true child," said Katherine, her voice trembling with emotion.

"But you see," remonstrated Richard, "it was only fair that my employer should not lose the money. He gave Hard Tack the position because of me, and he had just taken in two other boys from

up the river that same week. It would not do for them to suffer because of the other fellow's fall."

"They are doing well?" questioned Katherine, who knew that "up the river" meant Sing Sing Prison.

"Very well, thank God. I have discovered Hard Tack's hiding-place and intend to go after him to-morrow; and this time I am going to keep my eye on him and be near to strengthen him when he is weak. I can get him work at once, and I intend that he shall share my room until he grasps God's promises in real faith, and knows that 'Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.' I will never lose faith in a man if he falls away a dozen times, for I know that when he gives himself truly to God, and cries in honest helplessness for aid, that God will hear."

"Ah, yes, it is faith in God and not man we need, and I am glad that you see that already," said Katherine. And then she added: "I thank my God for you, Mr. Masterson. May you ever be true to the Christ who is so beautiful to you to-day," and, with ringing confidence—"you will be. God keeps His own, but," slowly, "I do not merely want to see you kept from sin but I want to see you great in the kingdom of God."

As she finishes he sees on her face the rare smile

that only a rare soul makes possible; and she sees there the fresh frankness of a spiritual friendship that is as different from the old mad worship as are the burning rays of the tropical sun from the soft light that gilds the autumn evening in an Irish village.

CHAPTER XXXII

A PARTING GLIMPSE

I AM almost afraid to take the reader of this tale to the rooms of the Fidelity Club; not because he will be demoralized thereby, but because he will scarcely recognize the little girls of the Finnegan Association in this handsome house in Mott Street. It is a little wooden structure back from the street, and it contains nine rooms, every one of which presents a busy scene. Down in the kitchen twelve girls are baking, and cooking, and boiling, under the direction of Alice, whose bright face is almost a classic-looking one underneath the chef's jaunty white cap; and upstairs, Katherine is instructing a bevy of girls in clean pinafores, how to make beds and keep a house clean. This is the kitchen-garden department and there is no section of the settlement that is as interesting, except, perhaps, Katie Finnegan's. This particular section has no name, but it is universally understood that ethics, morality, philosophy, and religion are taught.

To-day it is a mothers' class that Katie is ad-

dressing, and she is possessed of such adaptiveness and versatility that neither the mothers nor the other workers think it strange that they listen to all she says as if years of experience had been her tutor. But perhaps they had. If she was not a mother she had been a child, and it was from that side she viewed the question. John and Mrs. de Rutyer and Richard were allowed to sit in the class; for John had promised to behave well; and Mrs. de Rutyer not to criticise the speaker's grammar, at least until the lecture was over. No promise was exacted from Richard.

"'Tis all wrong," commences Katie, clearing her throat, "to say children should be seen and not heard. You might as well say to a poor kid, 'yer to be heard and not seen.' Yes, an' ye might as well give him the measles, the mumps, and a pain in de neck as to tie his tongue w'en his brain's goin' as quick es a woman from a mouse. Learn to respect a child even if she ain't more dan seven. If ye want yer youngsters to be good, be good yer-self. Ye wouldn't tell a girl to make a cake an' not show her how, would ye? I'm sick o' hearin' mudders moanin' about deyre Tommies an' Nellies bein' bad, w'en dey never was shown any udder way to be. Keep de young uns clean; water's cheap enough, an' ye can make a bat'-tub outer a wash-tub

if ye want one. If a girl's body is clean she feels as if de cup she drinks out of ought ter have a washin', an' den she don't care to sleep in a bed w'at ain't white. After dat she'll want to loin so's she can make more money an' move inter a decent neighborhood. I'd die, I believe, widout two bat's a week; an' if I couldn't have 'em I don't t'ink me soul would feel the same. Ye can't have a white soul in a dirty body any more den clean water in a mud-puddle, or a hot dinner on a cold plate. If yez ain't better for goin' to church, stop goin' an' make a church o' yer heart afore ye goes again. Dat's w'ere de real church is anyhow. God wants flesh an' blood, a long sight before He wants stone an' mortar.

"Prayin' and goodness begins in de brain. Dat's w'at God says; and we must b'lieve Him. If we can't b'lieve t'ings we can't live dem. Some people say dey b'lieves in goodness, so dey starts a club (dey calls it a church), an' dey makes Christ de vice-president to deyre own good works. Now, I say make Christ president, an' let yer good works be His vice-president. I don't care a snap fer w'at ye call yer stone church, but I want yer brain church to have Christ over de door, den yer life will be es white es—es—es if it had a bat' every hour.

"Oh, me fren's, be good and be true. It pays

now an' all de time. Dey may get 'long uptown wid a God dat made de world an' walked off den, knowin' dat d'uptown people would take good care of it. Down here we need a Saviour who knows every bit 'bout our rheumatics, an' our lan'lord an' de undertaker's bill, an' de choke in our t'roats w'en one of de family dies. De very air makes some o' de poor fellers down here go an' get drunk ; an' want o' food makes sickness an' misery, an', o' course, misery makes fights. Oh, we needs a God dat knows us right t'rough. We need Him, an' we can have Him right now if we want. Let's pray."

After the prayer Richard sang for the women, and then he went to each one and, in his grave, pleasant way, said a "word in season;" promising to call and see this one's father, that one's son, and the other one's husband. Then the visitors filed out, and, a few moments later, a merry party gathered in the bright, cheery dining-room around the festive board, over which Alice gracefully presided. She and Mrs. de Rutyer sat together, and discussed the settlement ; Richard and Katherine talked about the growing prison-work, and John and Katie Finnegan were in their element, mutually vowing to eliminate cranks from one branch of the work at least.

"Look here," said Katie, impressively, "w'en-

ever you ketch a crank round here bring her or him to me, an', if nawting else does, I'll keep a dog."

"That is an excellent idea," said John, soberly. "I agree with you, Katie, that God gives the blessing of a sound mind to His children; so we must not let people with hobbies ride over other people's good sense, and set themselves up as a sample of what Christianity does."

"Oh, I've instructed Lizzie Kelly and Mamie Scollard an' Mattie Foy an' Lizzie Dominico how ter act w'en I ain't here," said Kate. "A big fool of a man came down last week an' told Lizzie Kelly, who's honester dan nature an' dis neighborhood made her, dat she was a child of de devil, an' like her father.

" 'Get out o' here,' said Lizzie. 'I'm a child o' God whom de devil was tryin' to get but couldn't, so he sent you. Don't you come tellin' me de devil's my father. Maybe I was t'inkin' once o' adoptin' him, but God gave me new sense.'

"The feller tried to prove to Lizzie dat she was borned to help de devil; dat her first screech was a bad one, an' dat she was goin' to de bad place unless she gave a testimony dat she and de devil was near relatives, and might make up if it wasn't for de crazy visitor's prayers. Lizzie put him out—an' dat's good t'eology."

"Katie," whispered John, "a hose is excellent!"

"Find out how much a yard 'tis. I'll get a long one, so dat it will be doubly eloquent," replied Katie; and then Katherine looked at John and said, "What is the plot about, John?"

"I refuse to be interviewed," said John, gravely, shutting his lips and looking soberly at the table-cloth.

"I hain't got no wife to be 'fraid of, so I'll tell ye," said Katie, mischievously. "I'm goin' to buy a hose an' give a shower-bat' to any crank who pretends he's sanctified, an' proves it by makin' everybody else believe dey're as black as de devil, an' full of a dirtiness dat only his brand o' goodness can cure. I'll have a dog for de dames dat b'lieves work is a sin, an' two dogs and a cat ter go after de loons dat says marryin' is ungodly. If it is, God made it so, for He gave de first man his wife—bad bargain poor Eve got too. De idea of Adam blamin' Eve for his bad fall. If men was obedient den to dey're wives, dey've got well over it."

"Why, Katie!" cried Mrs. de Rutyer, putting her lorgnette to her right eye.

"Oh, say, drop dat google-eye," said Katie, in disgust. "Leave it at home after dis, Mrs. de Rutyer. It's out o' place down here, an' it gives me de locomotive axles every time I see it."

"Wh—at does it give you, Katie?" gasped Mrs. de Rutyer.

"Please, don't correct me now; it stops me powers o' speech. I know it gives me chills in me spinal pillar——"

"Column, Katie."

"Well, what's de difference. It won't bodder me no more under wan name dan de udder."

"I think it might be very helpful," said Richard, "if Katie would impart to us some of the practical wisdom with which she is so richly endowed;" and Katie, who was very fond of him, smiled sweetly and said, "Long-faced cranks made me sick o' religion w'en I was a kid, an' I won't have dem makin' de devil more attractive to me friends while dey're 'maginin' dey're doin' God's work; dat's all," said Katie. "Argufyin' ain't de t'ing. Dey got no sense, an'," smiling as she recollected the debate at the Sorceress Club, "dey can only be made b'lieve t'ings t'rough deir feelin's. Oh, water's good. Dat's all."

"Hear! hear!" said John. Katherine, Alice, and Richard looked sympathetic, but Mrs. de Rutyer only turned her eyes to the ceiling, shut her lips tight, looked at Katie two or three times, then coughed, and then decided to eat a biscuit.

This pantomime was not lost on Katie, who

winked roguishly at Katherine, as much as to say, "She's floored this time."

Silence fell on the little assembly, but after it became unbearable Alice said, quietly, "I do not know that I would suggest Katie's extreme measures for *honest* cranks, but I think she has not overestimated the harm they do to the cause of Christ. I do not believe Mr. Masterson would have had forty men serving God to-day, nor would his pleading attract hundreds nightly to the mission if he did not have the spirit of God and use common-sense."

Richard's face grew red, and when Mrs. de Ruyter raised her lorgnette and levelled it at him, he grew redder. Katie saw this and promptly knocked down the object of her aversion with the end of her fork, and then, as if nothing had happened, she said, "Yes, an' s'pose Mr. and Mrs. Pierce came down here an' went to Sing Sing Prison lookin' as miserable as scalped Indians an' actin' like a circus broke loose in a cemetery, how'd you s'pose dey'd do? I t'ink water an' a dog is de t'ing."

"Katie, your language!" this from Mrs. de Ruyter.

"My language is not on trial, Mrs. de Ruyter," said Katie, smiling at her. "In time I'll do better wid dat ter please ye, but I'll vote fer water an' a dog fer de crank all de same."

"How is your prison work, Katherine?" asked Mrs. de Rutyer, anxious to change the subject.

"It is Mr. Masterson's and John's as well as mine," said Katherine, "and it is very promising. God is good to us, and we are humbly trying to follow where He leads, for without Him we would, indeed, be discouraged, so difficult is the work we have taken up and so faithless is the world about it. John has been very successful in obtaining work for many of the men."

"I understand that you are going to preach at the mission to-night, and that you are to have several of your converts there. Are they ex-prisoners? and will they tell about their past life?" asked Mrs. de Rutyer, turning to Richard with the hiss of the last "s" in prisoners still on her lips.

"I *am* going to preach," said Richard, gravely. "Some of the men I led to God are going to assist me in the service. They are Christians, and their private life is as sacred to them as ours is to us. I wish it to be so."

It was a quiet rebuke, but a sufficient one; and Mrs. de Rutyer never had to be taught that lesson again.

That night Richard preached in the mission where we first met him. Katherine played for him, and she watched his face with tear-dimmed eyes

when he pleaded with the simple, telling eloquence that he learned to use in his boyhood days, when only squirrels' and birds' hearts responded. There was warmth, friendliness, and conviction in his voice; there was a sincerity and honesty too; and everyone present knew that if ever a man believed what he said, Richard Masterson did. If there was strength in him, there was, too, the sympathy of subdued weakness, and the man who had never tried and the man who had tried, but had not the courage to try again, knew that he could go to Richard and find patience, sympathy, and a friendly heart. He never prescribed universal prayer and universal salvation; but, like the physician of souls he was, he found out where the sore spot was and talked it over with the patient. But he always refused to talk about the condition of the sore or the progress of the disease, for purity of mind and a forgetting of the past and its ugly details were characteristics of his work. Richard knew that good and evil begin in the mind; and with the indwelling Christ, there came to him a great love of purity and a loathing of sin.

"If the old man of sin is dead and the new man is alive," he would say, "then leave your old grave-clothes in the graveyard. Why resurrect them?" And then he would add simply, "I am naturally as

prone to sin as ever, but it is the Christ in me that does not want to drink whiskey or dwell on impure things."

"Mr. Masterson," said Katherine, as they sat that night in the parlor of the parsonage before saying good-night, he holding Stevie on his lap, her father holding her hand, for she was always a baby to him, "I cannot tell you how proud I am of you, or how happy you made me to-night. Oh, it is such a comfort to know that you are true."

"Do I really make you happy?" he asked, looking eagerly into her face, and looking with a tender pity that was such a large part of him, at the ugly scar, that he told himself he was partly responsible for.

"Indeed you do. Oh," as she noticed that his eyes lingered on the scar still, "you must forget all painful recollections. I would gladly bear it over again if only that unhappy man was saved."

"My noble friend!" cried Richard. "I wish I might bear my Lord's scars and yours too. Oh, how you both have loved me, and how utterly unworthy of even forgiveness I have been." Tears dimmed Dr. Irving's eyes then, but without saying a word he dropped Katherine's hand to take Richard's, and his mind went back to a drunken, blaspheming madman he had seen one night many

months before, but who was not at all the Richard Masterson sitting here before him.

"Praise God, Katherine," he cried, out of the fulness of his heart.

"Praise God!" reiterated Katherine reverently, and little Steve, who grasped some of its meaning and knew that no one was as good as his papa, said, "Yes, praise God and praise Papa too."

They were all silent for a moment and when Richard spoke it was to say brokenly: "I have failed everyone else, but I will never fail Him."

"I won't either, Papa," said the little fellow on his lap, for Stevie wanted to comfort his father and believed he could always do as he did; and then Katherine took the little boy on her lap and then and there showed him the way of Life. With wide-open eyes he listened, and presently the One who desires that we all become little children in order to understand Him, spoke to the little fellow; and from a pair of innocent baby lips came the words his father lisped brokenly in a prison-cell. "Dear Jesus—my Jesus, Papa's Jesus," and, clasping his hands together, "All our Jesus."

"My darling boy," cried Richard, and when the others stole away, he praised his Redeemer that though Stevie had neither great riches nor a great name, he had that which is greater than both, his

name written in Heaven, an inheritance of purity and the unsearchable riches of Christ.

* * * * *

"Welcome, girlie, I thought you had forgotten me," says John, as his wife opened the door of their room a little later.

"Forgotten you, dear?" said Katherine, and there was a soft, winning light in her eyes as she said it. "No, I never forget *you*. You are my reward after a day of hard work, so I always keep you for the last."

"On the principle that the last shall be first, I suppose," said John, kissing her as she twined her arms about his neck.

"Yes, kiss me again, John," she said, nestling closer to him and sighing like a contented child. "Oh, John, I thank God for giving us to each other; I am so—so happy. Tell me again that I am your Katherine."

John complied and then looked at her, and, just because she was so happy-looking, he proceeded to rumple her hair, and teased her so much about her "love-sick appearance" that her spirits rose and she resented the insult by throwing a pillow at him. John seized another one, and a lively pillow-fight that brought the light to the eyes of both was the result. Their happy laughter arose above the

sound of their feet as they scurried to and fro, following up every point they could, and Dr. Irving smiled in his study as it reached his ears. As Katherine was the first to commence, she was also the first to surrender, and, when she humbly offered John her weapon of defence and avowed herself beaten, he gallantly said, as he knelt on one knee before her: "Brave warrior, keep thy pillow. I would not deprive thee of a weapon thou hast so bravely ruined."

And ruined it was, for the feathers had all fallen out and now covered Katherine, making her look like a half-plucked goose. It was John's duty to remove the traces of the conflict, and, when he had done it, Katherine insisted on sitting on his knee and rubbing his already ruddy cheeks into a brighter glow, meanwhile saying, "My dear old John."

John certainly liked that sort of treatment if his eyes were any index to his mind; but, always full of humor, he could not let even such an occasion pass without a funny comment.

"Even if the parsonage burns up some night, girlie, we will have some table-ware left," he said, soberly.

"Why?" asked Katherine, surprised at the prosaic statement at such a time.

"Because you are such a spoon," he answered.

Katherine laughed and said, "Do you know, Johnnie, dear, that your happy disposition and continual smile is just the medicine a sorrow-seeking being like myself needs? You were sent into the world just for me—weren't you, dear?"

Of course John said that he was. Was there ever a lover who did not feel that he was a man of destiny when his sweetheart was around, and was there ever a pair who belonged to God, and loved as these two did, who had not a right to feel so, and to be as deliriously happy as it is safe to be? So we will leave them in silence for a few moments. They will be sane in a little while. Katherine speaks first. We cannot hear what she says, but it makes John look happy and subdued, though he says, as gravely as possible: "Katherine, I must be wary. I am sure that you have some deep-laid purpose for making all this love to me to-night. I believe you are trying to soften my heart so that I will show you that letter Mrs. de Rutyer handed me as we left the mission. I saw you glance jealously at it."

"Oh, yes, I want to see that," said Katherine, running her hand into his coat-pocket and saying, sternly, "No secrets, sir!"

A mock struggle took place, and then Katherine drew out into the light a carefully written note that read:

"Get good, strong garden-hose, about fifteen yards of it. I guess you can buy a couple of good dogs in the pound. I'll train them in a week or so. Pete got a cat for me about an hour ago, and she can say 's-s-s-s' bad enough to give a queer visitor a fit. Don't get mad dogs, because they'd agree too well with the cranks. Say, Mr. Pierce, couldn't you swipe that google-eye from Mrs. de Ruyter. She makes me so nervous when she points it at me that I feel like dropping. If you don't get it away from her, I'll get a soda-water bottle an' look through it when I'm in the street-car with her, to show her how chumpy she looks. She's all right, but that old obse'vatory she looks through—oh, say!

"Don't you think I'm doing nice in my spelling an' writing? I tell you the public school is what! I'm going to be a fine woman yet. Oh, I wish I could be as fine as Mrs. Pierce or as good as you, even. That Mr. Masterson is all right, I tell you. God bless you all every one, an' I hope He will make us sensible so that we'll know how to help those poor things who ain't helped yet.

"Yours most truly,

"KATIE FINNEGAN."

S. P. Don't forget the hose and the dogs.

"You and Katie will be in the hands of the law, John, if I do not take care of you," said Katherine, when she had ceased laughing. "I should not be surprised if I should go to Sing Sing Prison some

day and find Katie there for annihilating cranks, and you for manufacturing illegal hose and stealing city dogs."

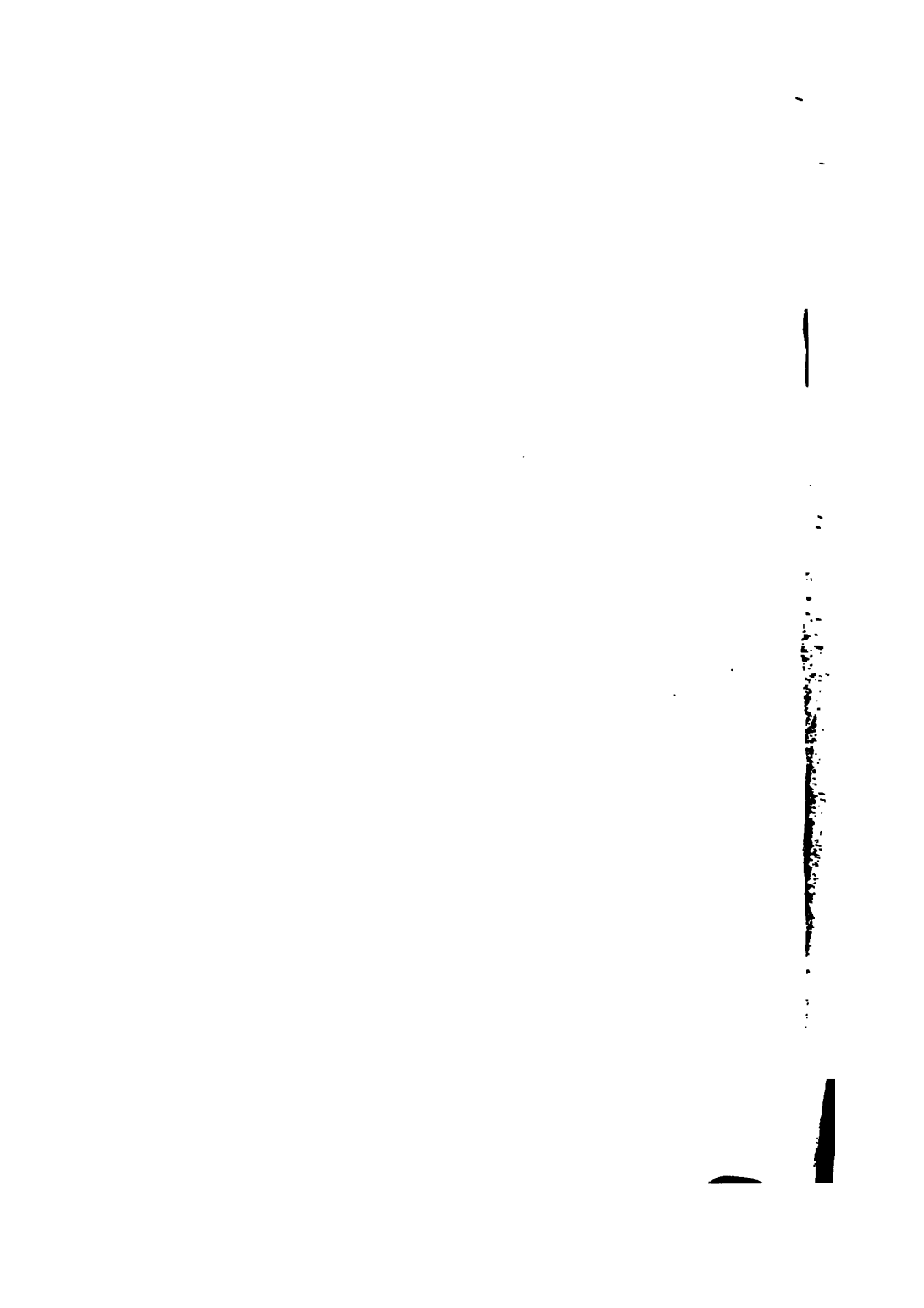
"If such crank exterminators as Katie could be made to order, I would apply for a patent immediately," said John.

"Dear, loyal, honest Katie Finnegan," said Katherine, thoughtfully, as she rumbled her husband's hair. "She would be a militant preacher, indeed, for she has the courage of every conviction. I will take her in hand to-morrow and urge her to modify her views, but I would not want one bit of the aggressive spirit taken out of her heart, for I believe the simple President of the Fidelity Club will yet be a Joan of Arc of the Cross."

"So do I, darling," said John, and then, as if he regretted the tenderness that sprang up in his heart at the sound of Katherine's soft voice, he added with conviction, "Rubber hose and dogs are as good weapons as Joan ever fought with."

THE END.





**This book is under no circumstances to be
taken from the Building**

[illegible]

1

